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**LETTERS**

**FROM THE EAST:**

**WRITTEN**

**DURING A RECENT TOUR THROUGH**

**TURKEY, EGYPT, ARABIA, THE HOLY LAND, SYRIA,**

**AND GREECE.**

**BY JOHN CARNE, ESQ.**

**OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.**

**SECOND EDITION.**

**IN TWO VOLUMES**

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# LETTERS

FROM

## THE EAST.

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### LETTER XVI.

CONVENT OF ST. SABA.—THE DEAD SEA.—  
JERICHO.

WE went one morning to see the hill of Engedi, distant about six miles from the city: the weather was beautiful, and the walk a very agreeable one. Engedi is low towards the north, but descends steep into the wilderness on the south, on which side of it, not far beneath the summit, is the cave where David and Saul reposed. It at first appears neither lofty nor spacious, but a low passage on the left leads

into apartments where a party could easily remain concealed from those without. The family of an Arab resided in it at this time; the face of the hill around it corresponds to the description, "he came to the rocks of the wild goats." On these rocks we sat down, and took a repast; and though a coarse one, no luxuries of the table could gratify like the magnificent view before and around us. In the distance in front, at the end of the wilderness of Ziph, was the Dead Sea glittering in the sunbeams amidst its mournful shores.

The governor had continued to refuse us a guard, or permission to go to this famous spot, on account of the dangerous state of the roads, in consequence of the war of the Pachas. We had no alternative: it was heart-breaking to quit Palestine without visiting the Dead Sea, and we resolved to attempt it by traversing the wilderness of Ziph on foot. Antonio, the guide from the city, protested the route was impracticable, not only on account of the sands and difficult tracts to be crossed, but the wild and lawless Arabs who infested it; and he refused to

accompany us. The greatest loss was, however, the being deprived of the company of Mr. G., whose delicate state of health rendered so toilsome a route impossible. Antonio at last consented to make the attempt; yet our subsequent safety was entirely owing to Ibrahim, an Arab, whose family inhabited the cave, and who chanced to arrive as we were on the point of departing. On the assurance of being well rewarded, he agreed to be our guide.

Having disguised ourselves as well as we could, and consigned our money to G., who with his servant went to Bethlehem, we descended the declivity of Engedi into the wilderness. It was about mid-day, and extremely hot. The way was very wild and interesting. The hills, over which it chiefly led, were in general covered with a coarse grass, and in some parts composed of sand; they were intersected by deep and narrow valleys or ravines, filled with a wild verdure, in the sides of which were several caverns. The place was well calculated to afford secure concealment from pursuit amidst its recesses, as it did to David when followed by Saul.

In a few hours, we came in sight of the convent of St. Saba. Its situation much resembled that of Sinai, being built amidst precipices, on the brink of a deep glen, at the bottom of which the Kedron flows, and surrounded with walls and buttresses of immense strength. With some difficulty the fathers admitted us, as we had rather a suspicious appearance; the heat beneath the rocks without was almost insufferable, and, to our no small relief, the convent gate was at last opened. A heretic deserves tenfold blame if he finds great fault with the Greek and Catholic fathers; although they do in general consign him over to a hopeless state hereafter, their convents are the greatest blessing and comfort earth can have to offer him, in many situations, where else he would find nothing but a burning and thirsty desert. The church is a very ancient one, and adorned by the most grotesque figures of old male and female saints. You then step into a small paved court, in the middle of which is a dome, containing the tomb of the holy St. Saba: it is gilded and adorned in the usual tawdry manner of the Greeks. Michel, who

was all things to all men, and in his long travels had learned the different forms of worship of almost every faith, was here full of crossings, mumblings, and devout looks, till the good fathers regarded him as a very devout son of the church. The Catholics used to do the same; he could get over the Turks very well, and talk solemnly of the prophet; and the Jews he delighted by conversing on the grandeur and riches they were to attain, as prophesied in the Scriptures, with which he was well acquainted.

Hence we passed by a flight of steps into a small church, hewn out of the rock: it formed one lofty and spacious apartment, in which divine service was sometimes performed by torch-light. The industry of the monks was very conspicuous; flights of stone steps conducted to several small terraces, one above the other; and from below they had conveyed a portion of the soil, and grew a variety of vegetables on these terraces for the use of the convent. About thirty monks of the Greek persuasion reside here. The monastery is supposed to have been founded about twelve hundred

years ago, but the ascetic life was instituted earlier by St. Saba. In a dark and cavernous apartment, is a very extraordinary spectacle :— the opposite side of the precipices is full of caves ; a great number of Christians were slaughtered here by a body of soldiers sent by one of the caliphs : the skulls of those martyrs have been collected, and are piled in small pyramids in this chamber to the number of two or three thousand. Still ascending, for flights of steps and passages continue, you enter two or three delicious little cells, which might tempt a traveller to a month's residence at St. Saba. They were carpeted and cushioned in the oriental manner, and provided with a few books. We sat down and took some fruit and a kind of cordial kept there, and gazed on the prospect which the small window afforded, with infinite pleasure. The deep glen of the Kedron was far beneath, the wilderness on every side around, and the Dead Sea and its sublime shores full in front, illumined by the setting sun. A narrow wooden tower, ascended by a flight of steps from the convent roof, overlooks the desert to a

great distance. Here a monk is often stationed, to give notice of the approach of any of the wild Arabs who dwell there. As at Mount Sinai, these fellows come to the foot of the walls, and set up a loud clamour for bread. A large quantity of small brown cakes is always kept in the tower for these occasions, and they are thrown out of the window to the Arabs, who then take themselves off. A Greek, a hundred years of age, a fine old man, lived in an apartment of the building beneath the surface of the desert; he had passed fifty years of his life in travelling, and, being now quite blind, had lived several years in the monastery, to which he had given his property. He had earth from the shores of the Jordan brought him, and his only amusement was colouring, and drying in the sun, the shapes he had moulded them into, and then stamping Scripture figures on them, which were prized by the pilgrims. We walked for some time on the walls which hung over the precipitous glen; several foxes were peaceably running about at the bottom.

The sight of any thing that has life amuses

the good fathers : and we deeply deplored a circumstance that took place in a subsequent visit to St. Saba, through that unhappy German whom we had met at St. John's monastery, and who requested to accompany us. Being on the hills opposite the convent, we observed two very large birds, of the size of vultures, hovering about ; the German shot one of them. The monks almost shed tears when he returned with it to the convent, and with real sorrow told us these birds had for a long time come every day near to the convent, till they at last became attached to them, and they considered the death of one as a bad omen.

We now adjourned to the convent parlour, a long low room, neatly furnished, and lighted by a single lamp ; and supper was served in the Greek style. The conversation of the superior was very intelligent : it turned chiefly on the subject of the Dead Sea, of which he related some singular circumstances. About fifteen years ago, a human body, or what had the form of one, was discovered floating not far from the shore, and on taking it out, it was found to be



encrusted all over with a thick and hard coating of bitumen and salt, caused, no doubt, by having lain a long while in the lake. It happened to be the time of Easter, and the pilgrims, hearing of it, broke the body into innumerable pieces with infinite eagerness, believing it to be one of the ancient inhabitants of Sodom who had risen from the bottom. It was probably that of some unfortunate Arab who had fallen in. We now sought repose on the divan for two or three hours, and at midnight were awoke by the superior, who conducted us by a long passage to a window, through which making our exit, we descended by a ladder into the wilderness. To have proceeded during the day would have been little less than certain destruction, in consequence of being exposed to the observation and attacks of the Arabs. The height of the precipices for some time threw a gloom over our path, till we ascended a hill, and enjoyed a brilliant and unclouded moonlight. Our little party was only four in number, Ibrahim, the Arab; the young Antonio, who, though an excellent guide around the city, knew nothing of the paths he was now

treading; Michel, who was in his element in a journey of this kind. We were all armed save Antonio. The night was charmingly cool, and the scenery wild and romantic, and nothing broke the utter stillness of the hour, save that, once or twice, some bird of the desert, startled by our footsteps, broke from her nest in the rocks above with a shrill cry, and, sweeping rapidly away, all was hushed again. Many of the hills amidst which we passed, were of white stone, and had a singular appearance in the moonlight.

On entering on a more open tract, Ibrahim, who led the way, made a full stop, where two paths opened to the right and left, and one, he said, was as bad as the other. It proved so, for in a quarter of an hour more, the Arab tents were before us, glimmering in the moonlight, and we were obliged to pass within two hundred yards of them. The dogs which these people, like those of Egypt, always have round their habitations, perceived us, or heard our footsteps, which were light and quick enough; for they set up a loud barking all through the camp. No Arab, however, awoke, which was

not a little surprising, and with infinite pleasure we soon left the camp behind us. But in the course of twenty minutes we were confounded at seeing a line of tents again on the left. To retreat was worse than to advance, and we had nothing left but to keep the path at a small distance in front of them. To escape now seemed scarcely possible, as the loud barking of the dogs again warned the camp of our passage; yet, fortunate once more, we pressed on, and soon saw the tents lessening behind us. At last we reached the brink of the precipices which hang over the Dead Sea. The dawn was now appearing; and in the grey and cold light, the lake was seen far beneath stretched out to an interminable length, while the high mountains of Arabia Petræa opposite were shrouded in darkness. The descent of the heights was long and difficult; and ere we reached the bottom, the ruddy glow of morning was on the precipices over our heads. The line of shore at the bottom was about two hundred yards wide, and we hastened to the edge of the lake; but for several yards from it the foot sank in a

black mud, and its surface was everywhere covered with a greyish scurf, which we were obliged to remove before tasting it. There was not a breath of wind, and the waters lay like lead on the shore. Whoever has seen the Dead Sea, will ever after have its aspect impressed on his memory ; it is, in truth, a gloomy and fearful spectacle. The precipices, in general, descend abruptly into the lake, and on account of their height it is seldom agitated by the winds. Its shores are not visited by any footstep, save that of the wild Arab, and he holds it in superstitious dread. On some parts of the rocks there is a thick sulphureous encrustation, which appears foreign to their substance ; and in their steep descents there are several deep caverns, where the benighted Bedouin sometimes finds a home. No unpleasant effluvia are perceptible around it, and birds are seen occasionally flying across. For a considerable distance from the bank the water appeared very shallow : this, with the soft slime of the bottom, and the fatigue we had undergone, prevented our trying its buoyant properties by bathing. A few inches beneath

the surface of the mud are found those black sulphureous stones, out of which crosses are made and sold to the pilgrims. The water has an abominable taste, in which that of salt predominates; and we observed encrustations of salt on the surface of some of the rocks.

The mountains of the Judæan side are lower than those of the Arabian, and also of a lighter colour; the latter chain at its southern extremity is said to consist of dark granite, and is of various colours. The hills which branch off from the western end are composed entirely of white chalk: bitumen abounds most on the opposite shore. There is no outlet to this lake, though the Jordan flows into it, as did formerly the Kedron, and the Arnon to the south. It is not known that there has ever been any visible increase or decrease of its waters. Some have supposed that it finds a subterraneous passage to the Mediterranean, or that there is a considerable suction in the plain which forms its western boundary. But this plain, confined by the opposing mountains, is partially cultivated, and produces trees, and a rude pasture used by

the camels of the Bedouins ; although in some parts sandy. It has never been navigated since the cities were engulfed ; and it is strange that no traveller should have thought of launching a boat to explore it, the only way that promises any success. Mr. H. travelled completely round it, but the journey was a very tedious and expensive one, as it occupied several weeks, and he was obliged to take a strong guard. He made no discovery. The superior of St. Saba related that the people of the country who had crossed it on camels, in the shallower parts near the southern extremity, had declared to him they had seen the remains of walls and other parts of buildings beneath the water : this is an old tale, although the waters have the property of encrusting and preserving most substances. Some stunted shrubs and patches of grass, a mere mockery of verdure, were scattered on the withered soil near the rocks. The golden and treacherous apples will be sought for in vain, as well as fish in the lake, which have also been asserted to exist. Its length is probably about sixty miles, and the general breadth eight : it

might be six miles over, where we stood. The sun had now risen above the eastern barrier of mountains, and shone full on the bosom of the lake, which had the appearance of a plain of burnished gold. But the sadness of the grave was on it, and around it, and the silence also. However vivid the feelings are on arriving on its shores, they subside after a time into languor and uneasiness, and you long, if it were possible, to see a tempest wake on its bosom, to give sound and life to the scene. We had now passed some hours at the lake, much to the discontent of Ibrahim, who, pacing up and down the shore, and gazing at the caverns, and the summits of the cliffs, was incessantly talking of the probable approach of the Arabs, or their espying us from above. The passage over the wilderness of Ziph had given us a more complete and intimate view of the lake than the usual route to Jericho, which conducts only to its commencement, at the embouchure of the Jordan. The narrow beach terminated about two hundred yards below, where the cliffs sank abruptly into the sea. We had now to walk to its extre-

mity along the shores, and over the plain beyond to Jericho, in a sultry day; and we took a last look at this famous spot, to which earth perhaps can furnish no parallel. The precipices around Sinai are savage and shelterless, but not like these, which look as if the finger of an avenging God had passed over their blasted fronts and recesses, and the deep at their feet, and caused them to remain for ever as when they first covered the guilty cities.

Towards the extremity of the sea we passed amidst hills of white chalk, and then entered on a tract of soft sand. Ascending a sand-hill that overlooked the plain, we saw Jericho, contrary to our hopes, at a great distance; and the level tract we must pass to arrive at it, was exposed to a sultry sun, without a single tree to afford us a temporary shade. The simile of the "shadow of a great rock in a weary land" was never more forcibly felt. We pursued our way over the dry and withered plain; the junction of the Jordan with the lake being seen far on the right. It was extremely hot, and I had thoughtlessly thrown away all our fresh water, to fill the



leathern vessel with that of the Dead Sea. The route afforded no kind moisture; springs or streams it was vain to hope for; and my poor attendants threw all the blame on me, and cursed from their hearts, the infamous water that precluded the possibility of quenching their thirst. Once or twice I tried to drink it, but its abominable flavour was much worse than the most parching thirst. The plain was often intersected by deep and narrow ravines, the passing of which added to our annoyance and fatigue.

It was near mid-day when we arrived at Jericho, and found our way into the single stone tower, called the Castle of the Governor. A fountain stood in the middle of the court, and we were ushered into his presence, in a sorry little apartment, through the sides and roof of which the sun and rain could both find their way. He was much astonished at seeing us, and swore he had never known the passage of the wilderness, unguarded and on foot, succeed before, except in the case of some pilgrims, several of whom, however, had been slain by

the Arabs; but they had attempted it in the daytime. About thirty soldiers are maintained here, to keep the Arabs in awe. The situation is a wretched one, and the village of Jericho consists of about thirty miserable cottages: there are no ruins worthy of mention.

Dinner was now served up. We had anticipated some pleasant wine and savoury viands; and having formed a circle of half a dozen round a low table on the floor, the party including two or three officers, a huge wooden vessel was placed amongst us. It contained not the exquisite *baklow*, prepared expressly for the Sultan's palate, or famed cakes of roses of Damascus; but a mass the aspect of which defied investigation. After a mouthful or two, however, it was found to be composed of warm cakes of bread, baked on the hearth, and broken into small pieces, hot water and melted-butter being poured over it: it was stirred about well by the hands of one of the faithful. A few mouthfuls were devoured by us with good grace, as we expected another *entrée* quickly. The Turks took enormous handfuls

with extreme deliberation; and his excellency the governor, having a fancy that a hard substance, bolted into the mouth, had a higher and more prolonged relish, compressed his handful with some skill into a large ball, while the moister ingredients streamed over his fingers. The wooden bowl being removed, we looked long and anxiously, but no viand came more, and water only was permitted to dignify this repast.

We were too much fatigued to visit the Jordan this day; but in the evening we walked to the fountain at the foot of the mountain Quarantina. It has ever been venerated as the same that the prophet Elisha purified, "whose waters were bitter, and the ground barren." It is a beautiful fountain, and, gushing forth with a full rapid stream, falls into a large and limpid pool, whence several streams flow over the plain. The fruitfulness of the neighbourhood, which is covered with a rich verdure and many trees, and well cultivated, arises chiefly from the vicinity of this celebrated fountain, the waters of which are remarkably sweet. The "City of

Palms" cannot now boast of one of those beautiful trees around it. The plain, about six miles wide, and inclosed by ranges of mountains, as far as Tiberias, a distance of three days' journey, has a rich soil and delightful aspect, the Jordan's course through it being perfectly straight. At present it is visited and dwelt in only by the Arab tribes. The rocky mountain Quarantina, that rises near the fountain, is pointed out as the scene of the Saviour's temptation in the wilderness; on what authority it is difficult to guess.

The next day, accompanied by some of the governor's soldiers as a guard, we rode to the Jordan. About four miles across, the plain brought us to the banks, which were adorned with acacia and tamarind trees, and many shrubs and wild flowers. The sight of this verdure in such a spot was very pleasing. The river rushed by in a full and rapid torrent; its force would have swept away man and horse: this was the effect partly of the rains. It looked rather discoloured from the same cause: its taste was perfectly sweet, and the stream was

little below the surface of its banks. The soldiers were restless, and anxious to be gone; for which there was no apparent cause: but they are fond of enlarging on danger from the Arabs. During the summer season the quantity of water in the river must be greatly diminished, but it never now overflows its banks. Tradition has not preserved the spot where the Israelites crossed; and, what is strange, it is impossible to find out from Christian or Arab in what part Mount Nebo is to be found. The width of the river was about twenty yards, and it appeared very deep.

We returned to Jericho, and endeavoured to amuse the evening in the governor's desolate tower; but the resources were very scanty: and as he is seldom honoured by strangers' visits, he makes them pay handsomely when they do come. The rain fell in torrents in the night, and found its way through his excellency's roof, and fell in profusion on our beds; and it was only after one or two experiments on different sites in the chamber, that we could close our eyes without being deluged.

The next day, attended by a few horsemen from the castle, we set out on our return to Jerusalem. It was a comfortless and pitiless journey, leading over a succession of dreary hills, far unlike the route through the fine and romantic wilderness of Ziph. The rain beating heavily in our faces, and swelling every mountain torrent, compelled us to proceed at a slow rate. Poor Ibrahim walked beside the horses the whole way, and looked as if he would rather have been in his native desert. At last we wound up the ascent to Bethany, descended the hills, and, crossing the bridge over the Kedron, entered the city again. Father Giuseppé received us with uplifted hands and looks; not quite so interesting as the sight of two or three warm dishes, attended by a good bottle of wine, which were quickly set before us, and made some atonement for penance at Jericho. Ibrahim also got accommodated, and, for the first time in his life, feasted in a monkish cell, and seemed so much taken with it, that it was doubtful if he would not have forsaken his cave at Engedi, and turned

Catholic, to have tasted such luxury always. The governor was much enraged with the poor fellow for undertaking to guide us on the journey, and threatened to punish him: we begged him off, however, and sent him home to his cavern well rewarded.

## LETTER XVII.

## JERUSALEM.

ONE morning we paid a visit to Procopius, a Greek bishop, who received us with great politeness. The convent is remarkably clean and neat, though the number of monks is not very large; it contains numerous apartments for the accommodation of the Greek pilgrims. The jealousy between these people and the Catholics is very great: the latter, however, possess the monasteries at Bethlehem and Nazareth, which must bring them in a pretty considerable income; but the former have lately made the most alarming encroachments in the Holy Church of the Sepulchre, where the Pope's empire, like that of the Sultan, is hastening to decay. The chapel, erected on the tomb of



the Virgin Mary, in the valley, they divide between them.

A procession of the Catholic priests, accompanied by several pilgrims, took place at one in the morning ; and we engaged the evening before to be of the party. There was no moonlight, and, as the path was rather narrow and devious, a number of torches were carried. The object of this procession was to visit the tomb of Lazarus ; but as many other sacred places were comprised in the tour, several hours were necessary for its accomplishment.

It was quite dark, and about an hour past midnight, when the procession issued out of the gate of St. Stephen, and descended the side of Mount Zion in good order. The pilgrims were barefooted, and marched slowly and solemnly after the priests, who chanted as they went along. The party stopped at the Garden of Gethsemane, with signs of much grief and trouble, and sang and prayed, and then ascended Mount Olivet, over the beautiful side of which the torches cast a doubtful and glimmering light. The pilgrims were men of dif-

ferent ages and countries, but all discovered marks of the deepest reverence and impassioned feeling. To the priests it was too much a matter of habit and routine to excite their feelings beyond the usual level.

The procession halted again on the top of the Mount of Olives, endeared by so many sacred and glorious remembrances, and, passing by the ruins of Bethphage, at last arrived at the rock, in which is hewn out the tomb of Lazarus. Every one descended into it, and the excavation was scarcely able to contain the whole number. The narrow flight of steps leading down into it, allows a very partial light, even in the daytime; but now the sacred spot was vividly illuminated by the number of torches held beneath. The flame that waved in the open air as they marched along, now burnt clear and steady. On the floor of the sepulchre stood all the priests, while the pilgrims hung round and bent over them with the utmost eagerness and interest, to catch a glimpse of the tomb where the body of Lazarus had lain. It is about the size of the hu-

man form, and is hollowed out in the middle of the rocky floor. The chant was here of the most solemn and impressive kind, of the victory gained over death and the grave by the power of the cross, and of the resurrection to life eternal. Save the voices of the pilgrims and the priest, all without in the village of Bethany was hushed in the deep silence of night.

When the party left the sepulchre, the daylight was already breaking; and returning slowly by the same route, the gate of St. Stephen admitted them again, as the rising sun began to crimson the East.

The road to the Dead Sea is no longer crowded, as formerly, with pilgrims of various nations, travelling to Jericho and the Jordan, to bathe in the sacred river. This journey is generally performed on foot, and is sufficiently difficult and toilsome, especially to the old and infirm. Many of these poor enthusiasts finish their earthly course in the Holy City, dying with the peculiar satisfaction of leaving their bones there.

Taking Antonio, the young guide, with us from the city, we went one morning to the place to which tradition has given the name of Michmash, where the troops of Saul, and afterwards the numerous army of the Philistines, were encamped, when the Hebrews "hid themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in pits." The two latter designations answer extremely well to the present appearance of the country; but of thickets and bushes there are none to be seen. A succession of low and barren hills leads up to the higher one of Michmash, which commands a fine view of the wilderness of St. John, the mountain and ruins of the palace of the Maccabees, and the hill and town of Bethlehem. There are several caves on the spot, one of which contains a fine spring of water, to which we descended, and drank of it with pleasure, for the day was extremely warm. While seated there enjoying the splendid scene around, a number of women of the country approached, singing in a wild and not unmusical strain: they walked in a kind of pro-

cession, and, saluting us very civilly, passed gaily on.

The aspect of the country around this spot is exceedingly barren; not a vestige now remains of the numerous woods which formerly covered it. Not far from hence probably stood the wood of Ephraim, in which was fought the battle of Absalom against his father David, when, it is said, "the wood devoured more people than the sword." The territory of Ephraim, which is a short distance hence, presents now only a succession of small and narrow valleys; very few of them have any cultivation; they are divided by barren and stony hills.

Few people were met with now on the roads in travelling through Palestine: the ways were generally solitary and silent. A poor and wearied pilgrim might now and then be seen dragging his weary steps towards the sacred city; but more frequently individuals, or detached parties, were encountered, belonging to one or other of the hostile Pachas, and proceeding towards the scene of action.

We were joined in our route one day by a traveller from Jaffa, a native of that place, which was under the dominion of Acre. He hoped to get into the city under our countenance, and had advanced a few steps within the gate of Bethlehem, when he was rudely pulled back and questioned by the guard, who without any ceremony clapped him in prison.

During the Easter week, a funeral took place at the Catholic convent. The body was brought and laid in the chapel, attended by a number of men and women; the latter were dressed in white. The organ played, the funeral chant was sung, and the whole service was conducted impressively and with decency, and without any of the clamour that so often attends oriental funerals. The body was then borne to the burial without the walls, where also the other churches have theirs. Here they come sometimes to mourn. A female, with part of her robe drawn over her head, or veiled, was seen seated by the tombs of her relatives on the summit of Mount Moriah, or along its sides, just beneath the walls. But there are few trees to

spread their shadow over the mourner, few associations of natural beauty to lend a kind of charm to grief. The Armenian, the Copt, and other Christians, bring their dead, where not a spot can be found but the ashes of a devoted people repose beneath it, from the Valley of Slaughter to the Valley of the King, which, in the words of prophecy, should be filled with the bodies of the slain.

The modern sepulchres of the unfortunate Jews are scattered all around. The declivities of Zion and Olivet are covered with small and ill-shaped stones, disposed with little order: these are the tombs of their fathers. In this way, with little decency and without honour, must their heads also be laid in the earth that was once their own blessed inheritance. "How is the beauty departed from Zion, and the glory from her children! they have sunk beneath the hand of their oppressor."

No feeling of patriotism kindles in the bosom of a Jew; no elevating remembrance of the past glories of his country; his attachments are all intimately connected with his own fancied

self-interest or aggrandisement. If he wishes ardently to breathe his last near the Valley of Jehoshaphat, it is because he believes he shall be judged there at the resurrection, and that all other people will be excluded. This is not an unfrequent feeling among them, and has induced many to exile themselves from their homes, and spend their remaining days at no great distance from the revered spot. In the family of a rich Jew, where we resided a few days, whose family and attendants were very numerous, the mountains of Samaria and other scenes of ancient victories were in view, where "the arm of the mighty was withered in the battle of the Lord;" but it was useless to speak of these things, they cared not for them, but spoke with eagerness of the future days, which could not be far distant, when the promised Deliverer should come, and trample all their enemies under their feet.

The only marks we met with of true sensibility and enthusiasm for the memorable scenes amidst which they lived, were displayed by a Catholic monk and an aged Greek. The former



had been an inmate for many years of the convent at Bethlehem ; he was bent nearly double with age, but his countenance was fine and his eye full of fire. He followed us, leaning on his staff, on the lofty terrace of the monastery, which commands one of the finest views in the East, and pointed out, with impassioned feeling, each holy and illustrious spot. “ It was there,” pointing to the valley beneath, “ where the shepherds beheld the heavenly hosts who announced the birth of the Redeemer ;” or, still nearer, “ where the fountain gushed out at the foot of the hill, that David desired to drink of, and his mighty men broke through, and brought him of the water.” The other priests smiled at the officiousness and ardour of the old man, who seemed to have been born for any thing but a monk.—The Greek lived in the middle of a wilderness, old and infirm ; his habitation was humble, and he was scarcely able to move a few steps from it. All his near relatives were dead, and he was left, as it were, alone in the world. It was seldom that a stranger’s step came near him, and still more rarely that of an

enemy : for what had he to lose ? His features brightened with joy as he received us and gave us his blessing. Unlike every other Greek we met with, he asked no questions respecting his native country or the war ; but spoke only of the land where he lived, and where he had come to die.

Having been so much delighted with our first visit to the monastery of St. Saba in the wilderness, we resolved to make a second. A pilgrim, who had come from Europe to see the Holy Sepulchre, begged hard to accompany us, as it was the only opportunity he could possibly have of making the journey. Having procured horses, we left Jerusalem early in the morning, without servants or guide. It was a dull and cheerless day, and the sky was covered with dark clouds. We passed down the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and crossed the stream that flows from the fountain of Siloam. On the right, beneath a large sycamore, is the spot where the prophet Hezekiah is said to have been sawn asunder. A small and verdant mound, about six feet in height, extends round the tree, and

was the scene of the martyrdom. It is seldom that the vicinity of trees is selected in Palestine as the theatre of miracles; rocks and gloomy caverns are generally the favourite spots. But around this spot, as well as the tomb of Zacharias, and the magnificent cavern of the Prophet of the Lamentations, there is no memento, no chapel, not even a crucifix to draw the attention and enthusiasm of the pilgrims. This would not answer the purpose of the monks.

The tombs of David and Solomon, of Abraham and Isaac at Hebron, are covered with Turkish mosques, and the foot of the pilgrim dares not approach them. Absalom has his pillar; David the cave and the fountain to perpetuate his memory; but Solomon and his glory are honoured with no vestige or monument—his reservoirs only are pointed out. The wretched village of Lazarea stands where the many palaces of his mistresses formerly stood; and the valley, where his gardens bloomed beneath, still offers a verdant and pleasant promenade.

We now followed the narrow and romantic valley that divides the opposite chain of moun-

tains, and is watered by the only stream around the city. Its murmur, from the great rarity of water, was delightful to the ear, and two or three cottages, around which are some trees, stand on its banks. The dreariness of the way was increased by the rain that now began to fall. As we looked back on the city, the walls of which terminated the view up this silent valley, we were struck by its gloomy and desolate aspect. It may be, in part, the effect of imagination; but when a beautiful and cloudless day lights up its deep valleys, rocks, and lonely tombs, its appearance is in the highest degree romantic and striking. But in a dark and stormy day, when the rains pour down the mountains, and the winds moan along the forsaken places, they seem to bring a warning of sorrow and affliction yet to come.

We now wound our way among the high and chalky cliffs towards the wilderness; the path was so rugged that we could not proceed very rapidly, and it was uncheered by the view of a single passenger. A young Greek monk, who was sent by the superior of the convent to attend

on us, afforded a strong contrast to the rugged aspect and garb of some others of the party. His chief employment in the monastery was to attend on its chief, and not much of his time was engaged in prayers and chants. His countenance was fair and feminine, and his thick raven hair fell in long and luxuriant curls down his back ; the monastic life had not thinned his cheeks, or given them the sallow hue of so many of his brethren. He was very gay and animated, and appeared to enjoy the excursion extremely.

The rain ceased, and the sky began to clear ere we arrived at the convent ; and our entrance was no longer attended with difficulty, as on our first visit. The good fathers recognized us instantly, and gave us a cordial reception. The few stores of the convent were instantly put in requisition to supply us with a dinner : tolerably good wine, a luxury denied us before, as it was then fast-time, made its appearance.

Were I condemned to be exiled to a monastic abode, the wild and romantic solitude of St. Saba should be my choice. The torrent of the

Kedron no longer pours through the glen beneath, but its sides are formed of fine and bold precipices, around the steeps of which hang a variety of shrubs and stunted trees of the desert. No sounds but the cries of the eagle and a few other birds are heard here ; and the most magnificent spectacle is the rising or the setting of the sun on the Dead Sea and its fearful shores.

During the feast of Easter, many pilgrims find their way to this convent from Jerusalem, to worship at the tomb of the holy St. Saba, who must have been truly a self-denying man, and less comfortably lodged than his successors.

The monastery has not much the appearance of a religious retreat ; its immensely strong and lofty towers frown over hill and valley, and are seen at a great distance. The Arab often casts a wishful eye at them, and would gladly set his foot in the clean and quiet cells within. Poor Ibrahim, the Bedouin, who lived with his family in the cave of Engedi, and who accompanied us in our midnight walk to the Dead Sea, liked his night's lodging in the cell wonderfully better than in his own dark cave, and ate with avidity

of the fine white bread and various viands set before him. The fine cakes of bread made by the monks are objects of peculiar desire to the Arabs, as they so seldom eat meat, and are careless whether it is camel or beef: their coffee and their bread-cakes are their chief sustenance; the latter are coarse and dark, and cannot vie in flavour or aspect with those of the convents. Here, too, they show the same art and foresight as in the wilderness of Sinai—they never intercept the supplies of flour sent from Jerusalem to the monastery of St. Saba, choosing rather to wait till it has been manufactured into the above-named white loaves, when they demand their tithe with loud clamour and infinite goodwill.

Ibrahim could certainly not boast of many comforts in his mountain abode; his residence there probably kept the pilgrims away. On our entrance we found a swarm of children around their mother, who, a dark Arab woman (a relative probably) told us, had just added another inmate to the cave where Saul and David met. No light cheered the obscure retreats of the

cavern, that seemed the abode of poverty and wretchedness. Is it any wonder these men are tempted to plunder the traveller and the pilgrim! But cruelty is not in their nature, and the fidelity and caution for our safety which this poor Arab showed throughout the journey could not be exceeded.

We walked out during the evening on the hills around the convent, and were shown the caves where so many of the saints of old resided. This wilderness of Ziph, or Maon, was a favourite spot of theirs, as it afforded them an excellent retreat from persecution, and is surrounded by many sacred and impressive scenes. Yet nothing could present a more awful and funereal aspect than these retreats—deep and dreary valleys, hemmed in on each side by precipices so high that the sun sinks untimely behind them, where at night, or by a partial moonlight, imagination may easily conjure up a thousand fantastic shapes, from their white chalky summits, rent asunder as if by a convulsion. The caverns, once the abode of so many martyrs, may be said to be innu-



merable, and are many of them in situations apparently inaccessible—in the very sides of the precipices, more than a hundred feet above the bed of the torrent. No tree, shrub, or even spring of water, gladdens the desolate scene: the curse of the Dead Sea seems to have reached even here; and many of the bones of that army of Christians slaughtered in the caves, remain to tell how nobly Christianity could sustain men who lived so holily, and died with joy in this mournful region. Some of the distant hills to the right, the sides of which were covered with a rude pasture, offered a contrast to other parts of the wilderness. We had passed these before on the way from Engedi, and seen several shepherds tending their flocks: their dress was scanty and their appearance wild, but their pipes at intervals played a strain, not very musical, but it appeared most sweet and welcome in such a solitude.

The sun had set, and the air already began to grow cool, when we again returned to the convent through its huge and massive gate,

which is secured with immense bands of iron. On the right, at a short distance, rises a strong and isolated tower, as if the monastery, elevated several hundred feet from the valley beneath, and environed by ramparts of rocks and mountains, stood in need of any additional defence.

We formed a numerous party in the parlour round the low table on the floor: the chief of the fathers did the honours with great goodwill, took his glass of wine, and conversed with great animation. Like the superior of the convent of Mount Sinai, his heart seemed to feel relief in the society of strangers, and in the tidings of other lands, of his own dear country in particular. What a marked difference between the Greek and the Italian monk! On the mind of the latter his country has no hold, excites no passion or sensibility; but the church, the saints, and the pope—on these he will dwell everlastingly. But the Greek—his first question is of Greece, her war, and successes, and sufferings; for these he will forget St. Saba, Santa Catherina, his conviction that

St. Peter never was at Rome, and all. The venerable chief of Sinai, how his eye lightened, and his bosom warmed, as he talked of his country! This he never forgot to do two hours at least every day, even in the depths of the desert, where he had been for so many years isolated. And at St. Saba, the poor monks crowded round our servants to hear the latest intelligence of the war.

The small parlour of the convent was now brightly illumined by several lamps, and coffee was handed round. We had not now the prospect of starting from our slumbers at midnight, as before, to continue a doubtful march, but enjoyed the tranquillity of our situation. The evening chant of the good fathers, rather nasal than melodious, was heard ascending from the small but ancient chapel. The moon had risen, and cast a soft yet clear light on every strange and varied scene around. The deep glen of the Kedron beneath was wrapped in gloom, with the many and extensive caverns in its sides; but the precipices above had now lost great part of their terrors, and lifted their

mountain peaks so majestically and high, as if they scorned the loveliness of the night that rested on them.

Few objects could ever present a more stern and impressive aspect than this monastery, as it stood tower above tower, with walls and buttresses of immense strength, and of a light yellow stone, on the very edge of those fearful descents: and so calm and hushed every thing around, undisturbed by even a breath of wind! No wanderer's footstep broke the silence of the desert; the Arab only had not gone to his rude tent, for he fears not at times to prowl in the shadows of the night; while the sentinel still continued on his watch-tower above, to look out over the wilderness, the fathers relieving each other in this task. What a situation for some of those wild and memorable events with which the land was once filled, and of which this convent would have been a fitting theatre, had it been other than the abode of quiet and senseless monks! Its appearance belies it, for you might swear, on approaching, that it was the abode of some bold and ruthless crusader,

who had come to exterminate the enemies of the cross. The traveller in Palestine cannot refrain from often recalling with impassioned feelings, the days when chivalry, with all its charms, was spread over its faded yet illustrious scenes ; when the wilderness echoed with the wandering step of the noble knight, who had left his own land to seek glory there ; when the minstrel's song and the harp's wild tones were heard even in the desolate valley, or on the mount where the armies of Israel triumphed ; or the lake's cold and dreary shore was lighted up by the watch-fires of the brave crusaders, who beheld every scene with enthusiastic delight, and thought it recompense enough to bleed and die on the earth that had been hallowed by the steps of the Redeemer !

It now grew late ; the fathers took their leave, and left us to our repose on the soft cushions, on which we slept soundly till the rays of the sun, entering at the small windows of the divan, summoned us to rise and quit this abode of the desert.

The convent contains several articles both

curious and valuable. A few of the cells are adorned with small figures of saints, very ancient and richly ornamented ; but they are not held in such high veneration as to be preferred to what the monks find highly useful in this country, a little money. We purchased a St. Joseph, and a very good-looking saintess, done in filagree work of gold, and a few articles in curious workmanship of wood, brought from Germany by some of the pilgrims, who presented them to the convent as the best gifts in their power. It is amusing to see the look of surprise and dislike assumed by the good fathers when offered money in return for their hospitality ; the right hand is generally placed on the breast, and the other gently waved as if to forbid the approach of the tempting metal. "My dear brother, what is this for?" said the chief of the Jerusalem convent ; "our hospitality is given freely for the love of Him whom we serve." But the good superior of St. Saba's eyes sparkled with joy as the round dollars rested on his palm ; for his lonely convent seldom received so large a party. Yet of what

use could the money have been to him, except to procure a few more luxuries for his cell, such as fine Cyprus wine, cordials, &c.? These we found more than once make their appearance, in these habitations, from a small and unsuspecting cupboard.

It was a lovely morning, uncheered however by "charm of earliest birds;" the sun was bright and cloudless on the hills and valleys; the good fathers placed before us a substantial breakfast, and we then bade them adieu, followed by a sufficient number of their blessings. The massive gate, with its huge bolts and clasps of iron, was once more unclosed. Few indeed are the times in the course of the year that it receives the wanderer, whose prayers and entreaties for entrance are often unavailing, when he is compelled to seek shelter under the canopy of the rocks around. So far from human resort, so gloomy and unassailable, and having within its walls caverns, dungeons, and heaps of skeletons, although of saints, it looked like the domain of Despair, in the beautiful romance of the Pilgrim's Progress. Had Bunyan, with

his powers of painting, but set his foot in Palestine, how truly and vividly would every scene have opened from his pen ! every other might then have been laid hopelessly down.

The path over the wilderness was much more lively and agreeable than on the former day ; and we welcomed once more, after a ride of several hours, the walls of the sacred city, as they were seen at some distance at the end of the valley. The day was sultry, and as we passed the small wood of olive-trees on the right of the stream from Siloam, we beheld a party of Armenians regaling beneath its shade. They were well-dressed men, and their horses were fastened to the trees beside them ; they invited us very pressingly to alight, and join them at their repast. It was rather tempting, for the weather was oppressively hot, and the rivulet beautifully clear, with the cold collation and bottle of wine laid in the shade on the green bank ; we declined the invitation, however, and pressed on towards the city, which we soon entered by the gate of Ephraim.

The close and prison-like appearance of the



streets around the convent, the mean and confined view, and the suspicious and dejected air of the few passengers in the streets, appeared oppressive and repelling after the free air and boundless prospects we had left behind. To celebrate the feast of Easter, but few pilgrims had arrived in comparison of former years; yet the ceremonies customary at this period were strictly observed. Olivet and Bethany were visited every day, and the small chapel on the summit of the former attracted the chief veneration. The print of the foot of the Redeemer, the last step that he left on earth, was often kissed with the highest devotion and with tears, as well as the scene of the last passion in the garden beneath, where the marks of the falling drops are yet left on the rocks.

The ceremony of the holy light, that took place during Easter, is, however, the greatest imposition practised on the poor pilgrims. On the floor of the rotunda stood every one who had arrived—not one was absent, or would have suffered any thing save mortal sickness to detain him from this wonderful scene. It took place

at night: the lights were all extinguished, the vast area with the dome was wrapped in profound darkness, and the whole assembly, full of expectation, preserved a deep silence. The priests were within the sepulchre, busily employed in preparing the miracle. The eyes of all present, Greeks, Catholics, Copts, and Armenians, were intently fixed on the tomb, whence the light was to burst forth, as a token of the divine approbation, and that joy, light, and immortality, were sprung from the darkness of the grave. This was the consummation of all: the processions round the sacred spot, the sprinkling of the incense, the tears and prayers, were all preparatory to this great token, which was to seal the joy and complete the consolation of every pilgrim. On a sudden the light burst in a blaze from within the chamber of the sepulchre, and streamed on the multitude of devoted Christians around. What a moment for a painter to have caught—from the expression of doubt, anxiety, and hope, that of wild and enthusiastic joy! The shouts and cries that instantly arose were actually stunning, accompanied with clapping

and waving of hands ; each one crying out in his own language, many on their knees praying fervently and loudly, and all hailing with ecstasy the light, the holy, the miraculous light ! It did not deceive them ; for it came vivid and unfading from the sepulchre, and each eye gazed on it with intenseness and passion, as if it was the light that was to cheer for them “ the dark valley of the shadow of death,” and take from the grave its fearfulness. The men, who were by far the more numerous part of the audience, were boisterous and half frantic with their joy ; but the women expressed it more by tears and silent clasping of hands. At last, when the priests thought the scene had lasted long enough, the light was extinguished from within, and the pilgrims, nearly exhausted with their fervour, but all delighted, gradually dispersed.

You would expect to find that the synagogue of the Jews was in some measure worthy of their capital ; but, like the Christians, they appear to avoid every appearance of ornament or comfort without. Their chief place of worship is a sorry and mean-looking building, to which

you descend by a flight of steps. It is situated in the midst of the Jewish quarter, and is supported, however, by some ancient pillars.

The most striking ceremony of this people is one which sometimes occurs without the walls of the city, when they assemble to celebrate the festival of the tombs of their fathers. They are not allowed to do this without the permission of the Turkish governor, which they are obliged to obtain by the bribe of a handsome sum of money. The whole Jewish population gather together in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, which is their favourite burying-place; because there they are to be finally judged. The ceremony is conducted with great decency, and is without any clamour or noise. They sit for some time in silence on the tombs of their fathers, with sad countenances, and their eyes fixed on the ground. Men, women, and children, are all assembled, and it is an interesting spectacle to see this fallen people mourning in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, where their kings have offered sacrifices; where their prophets have uttered their divine inspirations; and where they believe the trump

of the arch angel shall finally wake them to judgement. But even this consolation of assembling round the ashes of their fathers, they are obliged to purchase with money. It is well their sensibilities are blunted, and their spirit utterly bowed, or else the draught that is given them to drink would have too much bitterness, and the iron rod of the oppressor would enter into their very soul.

## LETTER XVIII.

## ACRE.—TIBERIAS.

WE had resolved next to visit Damascus, but various obstacles were thrown in the way by the governor, who considered the route too dangerous, in consequence of the war between the two pachas. Leaving the Holy City then, after a stay of about three weeks, we retraced the mountain path to Ramla, and, after passing a night at the Catholic convent, arrived at Jaffa on the following morning. Signor Damiani once more received us hospitably, and, fortunately, we found a boat in the port about to sail for Acre the next morning. We accordingly embarked, and, after being out all night, reached Acre the subsequent forenoon.

This town is at present the strongest in Sy-

ria, being encompassed with a new wall. As we were obliged to spend several days here to wait for an opportunity of going to Damascus, we had full opportunity of observing the effects of the war between the two chiefs. Three or four human heads were frequently brought into the town in the course of the day, cut off by the pacha's troops from some of the enemy's stragglers, or, in default of them, from the poor peasants. This war was occasioned by mere private feuds, and unauthorized by the Porte.

The young Pacha of Acre, who acted in a most rash and ungovernable way, opposed with success the stronger chief of Damascus by means of the mountain troops of Lebanon. He resolved on cutting a deep and wide trench all round the town, effecting a communication with the sea on each side: which was not impracticable, as the point on which it stood advanced considerably into the sea. But the trench, if executed, could not avail in any way for the defence of the town, as it was more than a mile distant, and an attacking army would find it easy to pass it in the night. But the pacha

believed the place would be impregnable if the water flowed all round it; and, to effect this object, he made the whole population go out and work from morning till evening.

The soldiers were seen going about the streets, and compelling by blows the idlers they met, to go and dig at the trench. The town was nearly emptied; and on walking one day to the spot, we found all ranks of people, rich men, merchants, and domestics, mingled with the poorer classes, working up to their chins in the ditch, each with his wicker basket in his hand, which they filled with the earth, and then threw its contents above the bank. Some others were employed in digging, and overseers were set over the whole: rations of bread and water were served out at mid-day, and at sunset they were allowed to enter the city. We walked out a short distance, and stood beneath some palms to view their return. The better order of people came first, the poorer followed; amongst both were seen several noseless and earless people, who had been the objects of Djezzar's cruelty. The mountain-



eers who had been compelled to come and assist in the work, came last, singing their mountain songs with great cheerfulness. The gates were closed on them, till they should be summoned to resume their task the next day.

This prince, Selim, is the second in succession from Djezzar. The instances of the latter's cruelty are innumerable. He seemed to take a supreme delight in destroying; yet he has built the handsomest mosque and bathing-house in Syria. Beside the former are a quantity of fine palms, and a beautiful fountain. He was a rigid Musulman, and never failed to attend the mosque twice a day, and died in his bed at last in peace, at the age of eighty years.

The history of his prime minister, the Jew, is tragical and interesting. This Israelite was an uncommonly clever man, and so well versed in all the affairs of the province, as to be invaluable to Djezzar, who cut off his nose and ears, however, for no reason on earth, but still retained him his prime minister. Suleiman, his successor, who governed only two years, could not do without the Jew's services; and

on the present Pacha Selim's accession, he stood in as high confidence as ever. "In those days," said Anselac, the Jewish merchant, who was bewailing to us the fate of his friend, "no Turk dared to turn up his nose at a Jew in the streets of Acre, or discover the least insult in his manner; but the face of things was changed at last."

The unfortunate Israelite had served Selim for some time with his usual integrity and talent, when his enemies, taking advantage of the young Pacha's ignorance and weakness, persuaded him that his minister, from his long intercourse with the Porte, and deep experience in intrigue, would probably be induced to maintain a secret correspondence, and detail his master's exactions. The next time the minister appeared, he was ordered to confine himself to his house, and not appear again at the palace till sent for. He obeyed, trembling and astonished, and remained in safety secluded amidst his family and friends.

But the habit of ruling had taken too strong a hold on his mind: this quiet and inactive

life pressed heavily on the old man's spirits, and he resolved to venture to go to court again. He came and prostrated himself before the Pacha, and humbly demanded to know what his offences were, and why he had been deprived of his office. Selim was very angry at seeing him again, and bade him instantly begone. The advantage he had thus given his enemies over him was not lost. A few evenings after, he was at supper with his family, when one of his servants told him two messengers from the palace were below: he instantly knew their errand, and tranquilly retiring to another apartment, requested a short time to say his prayers, and was then strangled by the mutes, and his body thrown into the sea.

“I was returning,” said Anselac, “on the following evening from Sidon, and saw a body on the shore, partly out of the water; and on coming to the spot, found it was that of my friend and countryman, the minister, of whose cruel death I had not heard.” This poor man removed with his family to Beirout, under the Consul's protection, as he thought the Pacha

might take it into his head to serve him in like manner, or strip him of his property.

Djezzar was called the butcher, partly from a small axe he carried at his sash of an exquisite edge; and he sometimes amused himself by coming behind a culprit, or an innocent person, (it mattered little which,) and, hitting him a blow with it on the back of the neck, putting an instant period to his cares. During one of Djezzar's journeys to guard over the deserts the caravan of Mecca, his nephew, Suleiman, found access to his seraglio; the chief, on his return, discovering the circumstance, drew his hanger, and stabbed several of his wives with his own hand. The Porte often attempted to take him off, but the various Capidgé Bashis sent for that purpose were none of them suffered to enter his presence, as the death-warrant of the Sultan, if exhibited in presence of the offender, is never resisted even by his own guards. He very civilly received all their kind inquiries after his health and the welfare of his province, and took care to have them taken off snugly by poison.

Having at last procured an excellent guide, who undertook to conduct us by a circuitous route to Damascus, we quitted Acre. Traveling over the extensive plain, we came in the evening to Ebilené, a village delightfully situated on an eminence, on the sides of which a number of sheep were feeding. We took possession of a large and lofty apartment, the khan of the village, and taking a pipe and coffee, than which nothing is more refreshing after a journey, we waited patiently for our supper. After a good while, this made its appearance; as usual, two or three dishes of meat cut into pieces, with a rice pilau, and placed on a table about six inches high.

It being night, a large fire was kindled in the middle of the khan, and many of the Syrian peasants entered. The scene soon became very gay; they had two or three instruments of music, a couple of fifes and a flute, and several of the young peasants danced in a circle, very gracefully, to their own native airs. The various groups seated, in their light costumes, beneath the pillars in the strong glare of the fire,

or behind in the shadow of the wall, composed a striking scene ; but the after-part of the night was doomed to be less agreeable to us. The villagers, one after the other, had dropped off, and not being aware that we were now entering into the territory of that race who may be considered the lineal descendants of those who so tormented the Egyptians, we lay down calmly to rest. But to rest was utterly impossible, as we were instantly invaded and bitten in every part of the body. Change of position, or place, was useless, for the old floor seemed to have been their inheritance for ages. Demetrée, Mr. G—'s Greek servant, a man of much humour and some corpulence, was peculiarly exposed to these assaults, and, after exhausting all his store of Greek oaths and anathemas, took refuge in the terrace ; but above, or below, there was no escape.

We quitted this village with no small pleasure, at an early hour, fatigued and unrefreshed, and after some time entered a long and rich valley, in which we halted for an hour at mid-day, and then pursued the way to Tiberias.

At a few miles distance is shown the field where the disciples plucked the ears of corn and ate: and within three miles of the town, turning out of the path for a short distance, on the left, we came to the Mount of Beatitudes, where Christ preached his sermon. It is a low and verdant hill, rising gradually on every side toward the summit, on which small masses of rock are scattered. It is admirably calculated for the purpose, as a multitude of people might stand on the gently sloping sides of the mount, even to the bottom, and hear distinctly every word of the speaker. The prospect of the lake beneath, of the mountains of Gilboa, and that of Bethulia, to the north, is extremely beautiful.

Proceeding towards Tiberias, we passed by a spot on the left, on a gentle declivity, where, tradition says, the five thousand were miraculously fed. The town of Tiberias is surrounded by a wall, but it is rather a wretched place within. No ancient remains of any interest are at present found here. A small and ancient church, to which a descent of several steps

beneath the surface leads, is called St. Peter's. The only lodging-place of travellers is in the house of a sheik, which is held in dread, on account of the myriads of fleas that inhabit it; from which we were fortunate enough to escape. On the shore, at some distance to the south of the town, are warm mineral baths, which are much used and esteemed. At the extremity of the north-eastern shore, some remains are said still to exist where Capernaum formerly stood.

The inhabitants of the town are chiefly Jews, with some Turks. Having two letters of introduction from the Armenian convent at Jerusalem to a rich old Jew, we were fortunate enough to be admitted into his house. The apartments were handsomely furnished; the table was spread with various dishes of meat and wine at mid-day and in the evening, and we were served with breakfast in the European style. This old man was a merchant of Aleppo, where several of his sons now lived in opulence, and he had come in his old age—for he was now fourscore—and built this house far



from his native home, in order that he might die at the lake of Tiberias. The attachment of the Jews to the places of their ancient record and glory, is sometimes excessively strong. In walking along the shores, we met occasionally Jews from Poland, chiefly elderly men, who had come from their country to this spot, from no other motive but to spend their last years round the lake. Our kind host had a synagogue in his house, and a Rabbi to officiate, and service was duly attended twice a day by his wife, who was half his own age, and all his servants.

On the night of our arrival, we walked on the terraced roof to enjoy the coolness of the air. It was moonlight, and the lake and its shores were as beautiful a scene as can be conceived. It brought to mind the night, though so different a one, when Christ walked on the surface of its waves to rescue his disciples. Yet Tiberias is a scene where Nature seems still to wear as sublime and lovely an aspect, as in the day when it drew the visitations and mercies of the Lord. No curse rests on its

shores, as on those of the Dead Sea ; but a hallowed calm, and a majestic beauty, that are irresistibly delightful.

The length of the lake is about fourteen miles, and the breadth five. The fish it contains have a most delicious flavour, and are much the size and colour of a mullet. The boats used on it are in some seasons of the year much exposed from the sudden squalls of wind which issue from between the mountains. The water is perfectly sweet and clear. The Jordan is seen to enter it at its northern extremity, and its course is distinctly visible through the whole extent of the lake. The range of mountains forming its eastern shore, is very lofty ; their steep and rocky sides are barren, with a sprinkling of trees on a few of the summits. The western shore, where the town stands, is lower, but its picturesque hills, divided by sweet valleys, are covered with a rich carpet of verdure, but almost destitute of trees. The ride to the southern end of the lake is very pleasant, where the Jordan flows out of it. An ancient bridge, some of whose ruined and lofty

arches still stand in the river, adds much to the beauty of this scene. We bathed here in the Jordan, which issues out in a stream of about fifty feet wide, and flows down a rich and deserted valley, inclosed by bare and lofty mountains. The stream was here clear and shallow; but it soon became deep and rapid. Little is said in the Scripture, respecting the extensive valley of the Jordan between Tiberias and Jericho. It must have been thickly populated, from its luxuriance, being watered throughout by the river. Yet, with all the charms of its situation, the air around the lake, during the summer, is close and sultry. Of all places in Palestine, however, a stranger would desire to fix his residence here; as a situation on any of the verdant hills around would be exempt from the often oppressive air on its banks.

We now bade adieu to the hospitable old Jew, who told us he looked forward with delight to the future judgement that was to take place in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, to be near which had been one cause of his coming here. It was

to be only on his countrymen; all the rest of the world were to be excluded:—a very necessary measure, for how the Jews are all to squeeze into the narrow little valley is rather hard to conceive. A small Turkish camp of cavalry, intended to act against the Pacha of Acre, was pitched without the town: their various dresses and fine chargers gave great animation to the scene. The afternoon was delightful, without being at all too warm; and we wound along the cliff on the western side of the lake with uncommon pleasure, for almost every step gave new attractions to the scenery. The mountains became loftier, and within a few miles of the northern end, drew back from the lake, leaving a rich plain of two or three miles broad between. Turning off here to the left, the light failed ere we could find a resting-place for the night.

Contesini, the guide from Acre, would have us stop in a low and damp spot; but a Turk, who had requested to become one of our party, advanced up on an adjoining hill, protesting that there was a village somewhere in the neighbourhood. Not very long after, we heard his

voice calling from some distance, and on following, found him planted in a small hamlet of three or four cottages; they looked so dirty, however, that we preferred sleeping on the roof to entering within. Having taken a frugal supper, it was vain to think of going to sleep, as from this elevated position we had a full view of the lake and its shores beneath, which were now lighted up by a cloudless moonlight.

The next morning the wind blew extremely cold; but cold and night-dews are much less evils than the nightly tormentors, which, however, we never met with in Palestine in any place but Ebilené. We now entered on a wild and stony tract of country, till about mid-day we came to the mountain of Bethulia, and wound up it by a long and steep ascent; the upper part is covered with trees.

On its summit is the modern town of Safet, in the midst of which rises a lofty rock, the top of which is occupied by the castle of the governor. The whole appearance of the place is the most *outré* and romantic imaginable. In walking or riding along several of the streets,

you are obliged to pass over the roofs of the houses, which stand on ridges of the rock, and seem to strive which can climb highest. It is a position of immense strength, and might well defy the power of Holofernes and his army, even without the aid of the beautiful Judith :— it answers exactly to the description given in the Apocrypha.

It being very hot, we seated ourselves beneath the shade of a large tree, in the middle of the scattered town, beside a fine fountain, to which the women of the place came for water, but none of them answered to the description of their heroic ancestor. It was a market-day; the defiles and terraced roofs of the place were thronged with people from the mountains and valleys; and our servants having procured some meat, we took our repast beneath the tree, in a primeval manner, by the fountain side, sheltered from the heat. The lake, that like a beautiful spectre haunts your course often and long, was seen through an opening in the mountains, far below, sparkling in the sun. The place being said to possess excellent wine, we

procured some as a resource for our journey ; but the search was most amusing, having to get at one house over the roof of another, or to descend a steep passage into a divan, the windows of which looked down over perpendicular precipices.

Towards evening we descended the mountain, passing by two or three springs of delicious water ; and in the course of a few hours came to the spot, opening into a rich plain, where Syria and Palestine are divided. As we were now coming into the seat of the war, it was necessary to be cautious what paths we pursued ; and while hesitating, two well-dressed Turks rode by, who assured us the one before us was safe to a certain distance.

Some time after dark, we came to the bank of a stream, on which stood a solitary cottage, inhabited by an old man and his son. The night was chill ; and dirty as the single apartment of the cottage seemed, we should have been glad to have availed ourselves of it, but no bribe could induce the peasant to admit us. We were therefore compelled to pass a comfort-

less night on the banks of the stream, and by day-break proceeded over the plain, cold and dispirited : our provisions were exhausted, and there was no prospect of finding any entertainment by the way. Near the summits of the mountains on our left were scattered a few Arab tents, but they were too far off, and our reception was too uncertain to make the attempt.

In about four or five hours we came in sight of an Arab camp, pitched near a rivulet of water in the middle of the plain, and flocks of cattle were feeding on the rich pasture ; the large tent of the sheik was conspicuous in the midst ; and we resolved to trust to their hospitality. Riding past the line of tents, we stopped at the door of the chief's, and alighting from our horses entered. The Arabs gave us a kind and friendly reception ; we sat down on a carpet spread on the floor, and in about half an hour a repast was brought of boiled rice, cakes of bread, and fresh and delicious butter. These people are altogether a different race from the Bedouins of the Desert ; they are richer, more civilized and peaceable : having settled with their flocks and



herds in one of the rich and wild plains of Syria, they decamp and wander to another in search of fresh pasture. Their encampments and their journeyings probably present a vivid picture of those of the patriarchs, who with their "flocks, and herdmen, and camels, went on their journeys," until they pitched their tents in a place that had water and was rich in pasture. While we were here, an officer arrived from the Prince of the Druses, with a demand of men from the Arabs for the war, as they were within the bounds of his jurisdiction. They looked very dissatisfied at this, and deliberated on it while the officer was taking some refreshment, and who, when he had received their answer, rose up and rode away. We bade adieu to these friendly Arabs, who would have considered any offer of remuneration as an insult.

By the way, the pipe of the Syrian shepherds, playing the wild airs of the country, was often heard in the mountains, and sounded very sweetly. The country, however, through which we were passing was uninteresting.

Towards evening we again met and crossed

the Jordan, not far from its source : it was here not more than a foot in width. The course of this river is for the most part perfectly straight. In the plain near where Syria and Palestine are said to join, it flows into a small lake, and thence to the lake of Tiberias and the Dead Sea ; it has scarcely a winding in its course.

We now began to wind up the steep hill, on the top of which the town of Hasbeia stands. Here again street ascends over street ; it is an old and populous town, and the ancient palace of the great sheik, or prince, is in the middle. We took up our abode in the house of one of the natives, and, being very fatigued, were delighted at the sight of a good fire, and the busy preparations for supper. In this house four brothers and their wives dwelt together in harmony. In the night it rained very hard, which put the roads into a dreadful condition.

We set out in the forenoon, and in the course of a few hours the weather cleared up. The tract we travelled over bore marks of the devastations of the war. The fine village of Rasheia, which we passed by, was destroyed : this was the result

of a battle fought a few weeks before, in which five men had been killed ; the force to which they belonged took to flight, and the victors spread havoc around as they went on. In the great battle, which was fought on the plain behind us a few days after our passing, between the troops of Damascus and those of the Prince of the Druses, joined with the force of Acre, ten thousand men were engaged on both sides, who fought with the distant fire of musquetry. Sixty of the Damascenes were slain, on which the army took to flight, and, had the Acrians pushed on, they might easily have entered the city.

At night we stopped in another large village, part of which had been also destroyed. We always found the Syrians very civil, and willing to afford the best accommodation in their power. On entering the cottage of a peasant, a fire is kindled on the floor, which is of wood or earth ; eggs are always to be had, sometimes fowls, and you spread your mattress on the floor ; and the people are thankful for a small remuneration.

The next morning we were obliged to pass

the summits of some of the mountains, which, as well as part of their sides, were covered with snow. The mountain of Gibl Sheich, crowned with snow, had for a day or two been a sublime object on the right.

On the following day we set out early, impatient to behold the celebrated plain of Damascus. A large round mountain in front prevented us from catching a glimpse at it, till, on turning a point of the rock, it appeared suddenly at our feet. Perhaps the barren and dreary hills we had been for some days passing, made the plain look doubly beautiful, and we stood gazing at it for some time ere we advanced. The domes and minarets of the sacred city rose out of the heart of a forest of gardens and trees, which was twelve miles in circumference. Four or five small rivers ran through the forest and the city, glittering at intervals in the sun; and to form that vivid contrast of objects in which Asiatic so much excels European scenery, the plain was encircled on three of its sides by mountains of light and naked rocks.

## LETTER XIX.

## DAMASCUS.

AFTER descending the mountain, we were some time travelling through avenues of trees and gardens before we entered the city. In the course of the day, we went to the Spanish Catholic convent, that contained a small number of fathers, who lived very comfortably. But we had not come to Damascus to live in convents; so in the course of two or three days we procured excellent apartments in the house of a merchant, a Syrian of the Greek religion. We stooped low to enter a mean door in the street, and found ourselves in a court neatly paved, containing orange and lemon trees, and a fine fountain in the middle. On the right of the fountain was an arched recess in the wall, on the floor of

which a divan was laid ; and here we took our coffee and pipe. A large and lofty apartment opened into the court, the lower part of which was floored with fine marble, with a small fountain playing in the midst ; the upper part was covered with carpets and cushions. Our host had a family of sweet children ; and his wife, a rather young and pretty woman, would sometimes insist on attending us at table, in spite of every remonstrance.

The city of Damascus is seven miles in circumference ; the width is quite disproportioned to the length, which is above two miles. The walls of this, the most ancient city in the world, are low, and do not inclose it more than two thirds round. The street, still called Straight, and where St. Paul is, with reason, said to have lived, is entered by the road from Jerusalem. It is as straight as an arrow, a mile in length, broad, and well paved. A lofty window in one of the towers to the east, is shown us as the place where the Apostle was let down in a basket. In the way to Jerusalem is the spot where his course was arrested by the light from Heaven.

A Christian is not allowed to reside here, except in a Turkish dress: the Turks of Damascus, the most bigoted to their religion, are less strict than in other parts in some of their customs. The women are allowed a great deal of liberty, and are met with every evening in the beautiful promenades around the city, walking in parties, or seated by the river side. The women of the higher orders, however, keep more aloof, and form parties beneath the trees, and, attended by one or two of their guardians, listen to the sound of music. Most of them wore a loose white veil, but this was often turned aside, either for coolness, or to indulge a passenger with a glimpse of their features. They had oftentimes fair and ruddy complexions, with dark eyes and hair, but were not remarkable for their beauty. Women of a certain description are often seen in parties, each mounted on a good horse, well dressed and unveiled, driving on with much gaiety and noise, with a male attendant to protect them from insult. The fruits of the plain are of various kinds, and of excellent flavour. Provisions are cheap: the bread is the finest to

be found in the East ; it is sold every morning in small light cakes, perfectly white, and surpasses in quality even that of Paris. These cakes, with clouted cream, sold in the streets fresh every morning, the most delicious honey, and Arabian coffee, formed our daily breakfast.

This luxurious city is no place to perform penance in ; the paths around, winding through the mass of woods and fruit-trees, invite you daily to the most delightful rides and walks. Summer-houses are found in profusion, some of the latter may be hired for a day's use, or are open for rest and refreshment, and you sit beneath the fruit-trees, or on the divan which opens into the garden. If you feel at any time satiated, you have only to advance out of the canopy of woods, and mount the naked and romantic heights of some of the mountains around, amidst the sultry beams of the sun, and you will soon return to the shades and waters beneath, with fresh delight.

Among the fruits produced in Damascus are oranges, citrons, and apricots of various kinds.



The most exquisite conserves of fruits are made here, amongst which are dried cakes of roses. The celebrated plain of roses, from the produce of which the rich perfume is obtained, is about three miles from the town; it is a part of the great plain, and its entire area is thickly planted with rose trees, in the cultivation of which great care is taken. One of the best tarts we ever tasted was composed of nothing but rose leaves.

There are several extensive cemeteries around the city: here the women often repair in the morning to mourn over the dead. Their various ways of manifesting their grief were striking, and some of them very affecting: one widow was accompanied by her little daughter; they knelt before the tomb, when both wept long and bitterly. Others were clamorous in their laments, but the wailing of this mother was low and heart-breaking; some threw themselves prostrate with shrill cries, and others bent over the sepulchres without uttering a word. In some of the cemeteries we often observed

flowers and pieces of bread laid on the tombs, beside which the relations sat in silence.

The great bazaar for the reception of the caravans at Damascus, is a noble building : the roof is very lofty, and supported by pillars ; in the midst is a large dome. An immense fountain adorns the stone floor beneath, around which are the warehouses for the various merchandize : the circular gallery above opens into a number of chambers for the lodging of the merchants.

The large mosque is a fine and spacious building ; but no traveller is permitted more than to gaze through the door as he passes by. Its beautiful and lofty dome and minaret form a conspicuous object in every view of the town. Many of the private houses have a splendid interior ; but there is nothing sightly in the part that fronts the street. The passage of two or three of the rivers through the town, is a singular luxury, their banks being in general lined with trees, and crossed by light bridges, where seats and cushions are laid out for the passengers. The bazaars are the most agreeable and

airy in the East, where the richest silks and brocades of the East, sabres, balsam of Mecca, and the produce of India and Persia are to be found. But one luxury, which Wortley Montague declared only was wanting to make the Mussulman life delightful, is scarcely to be found in Damascus—good wine. The monks of the convent have strong and excellent white wine; but a traveller must be indebted to their kindness, or go without. The numerous sherbet shops in the streets are a welcome resource in the sultry weather. The sellers are well dressed, clean, and remarkably civil. Two or three large vessels are constantly full of this beverage, beside which is kept a quantity of ice. The seller fills a vase with the sherbet that is coloured by some fruit, strikes a piece of ice or snow into it, and directly presents it to your lips.

Our abode was not far from the gate that conducted to the most frequented and charming walks around the city. Here four or five of the rivers meet, and form a large and foaming cataract, a short distance from the walls. In this spot it was pleasant to sit or walk beneath

the trees; for the exciting sounds and sights of nature are doubly welcome near an eastern city to relieve the languor and stillness that prevail. A few coffee-sellers took their stand here, and, placing small seats in the shade, served you with their beverage and the chibouque.

We often went to the pleasant village at the foot of the mountain Salehiéh. One of the streams passed through it: almost every house had its garden; and above the mass of foliage, in the midst of them, rose the dome and minaret of the mosque, and just beyond the grey and naked cliffs. The finest view of the city is to the right of this place: a light kiosque stands partly up the ascent of the mountain, into which admission is afforded, and from its cool and upper apartment, the prospect of the city, its woods, plain, and mountains is indescribably rich and delightful. The plain in front is uninclosed, and its level extent stretches to the east as far as the eye can reach.

The place called the "Meeting of the Wa-

ters" is about five miles to the north-west of the city. Here the river Barrady, which may be the ancient Abana, being enlarged by another river that falls into it about two miles off, is divided into several streams, which flow through the plain. The separation is the result of art, and takes place at the foot of one or two rocky hills, and the scene is altogether very picturesque. The streams, six or seven in number, are some of them carried to water the orchards and gardens of the higher grounds, others into the lower, but all meet at last close to the city, and form the fine cataract.

The streets of Damascus, except that called Straight, are narrow ; they are all paved, and the road leading out for some miles to the village of Salehiéh, is all neatly paved with flat smooth stones, and possesses a good footpath. Small rivulets of water run on each side, and beside these are rows of trees, with benches occasionally for the accommodation of passengers ; near which is sometimes found a moveable coffee-seller, so that ease and refreshment

are instantly obtained. The houses of the city are built, for a few feet of the lower part, with stone, the rest is of brick.

The inhabitants dress more richly than in any other Turkish city, and more warmly than to the south, for the climate is often cold in winter; and the many streams of water, however rich the fertility they produce, are said to give too great a humidity to the air. It would be a good situation for an European physician; and Monsieur Chaboiceau, a Frenchman, who has resided here forty years, being now eighty years old, appears to live in comfort and affluence, has good practice, and is much esteemed. The Great Sheik mountain, crowned with snow, is a fine and refreshing object from the city; and large quantities of snow are often brought from it for the use of the sherbet shops, and the luxury of the more affluent inhabitants. Every private house of any respectability is supplied with fountains, and in some of the coffee-houses a *jet d'eau* rises to the height of five or six feet, around which are seats and cushions.

We passed our time very agreeably here. In the evening some of the friends of our host came to sit and converse, and we sometimes rode into the plain, at the extremity of the line of foliage. The number of Christians in the city is computed at ten thousand, natives of the place, of which those of the Greek religion are the most numerous, and there are many Catholics and Armenians. They appear to live in great comfort, in the full and undisturbed exercise of their religion and their different customs. The intolerance of the Turks is more in sound than in reality; in all our intercourse with them we found them polite, friendly, and hospitable, and never for a moment felt the least personal apprehension in their territory, whether in towns or villages, or when we met them in remote situations. They are a generous and honourable people, and vindictiveness and deceit are not in their nature.

The state of the Jews at this time in Damascus was particularly fortunate; the minister of the Pacha was one of their nation, and they enjoyed the utmost freedom and protection.

Every evening they were seen amusing themselves outside the walls with various pastimes, and the faithful were looking on with perfect complacency.

One morning while walking about the city, we heard the report of several cannon, to announce the beheading of two commanders, who had taken flight, along with their troops, at the battle with the force of Acre and Lebanon a few days before.

On our arrival in Damascus, we had intended to hire a separate residence, and were recommended to a rather affluent Turk, who possessed one or two houses that were at present vacant. He was a barber, and exhibited another proof of the respectability of this class of people in the East, as is apparent in the Arabian Nights. The old man, extremely well dressed, with a good length of beard, was always found seated at his ease, smoking, or chatting with some of his friends. He wished us to take a luxurious apartment of his, situated on a terraced roof; it was profusely gilded, and the cushions of its divan were as white as snow, and it commanded



a superb view of the city and mountains. But the barber's wife was by far the more zealous part of himself, and protested with loud clamour, that infidels should never sully the purity and beauty of her divan; and he explained to us with sorrow, that, after a warm dispute, he was compelled to give way. He told us that when Buonaparte and his army were in Syria, he and many others in Damascus took arms and travelled a great distance to fight with the Giaours for the honour of the Prophet. "They were full of zeal; and our forces," said the old man, "soon had an action;—we were beat, and I received a severe wound; and when they carried me with them in the retreat, in an agony of pain I cried out, 'what had I to do with Giaours?—go to hell all the world!'"

The greatest luxuries the city contains are the coffee-houses; many of these are built on the bosom of the river, and supported by piles. The platform of the coffee-house is raised only a few inches above the level of the stream; the roof is supported by slender rows of pillars, and it is quite open on every side; innumerable small

seats cover the floor, and you take one of these and place it in the position you like best ; the river, whose surrounding banks are covered with wood, rushes rapidly by close to your feet. Near the coffee-houses are one or two cataracts several feet high, with a few trees growing out of the river beside them ; and the perpetual sound of their fall, and the coolness they spread around, are exquisite luxuries in the sultry heat of day. At night, when the lamps, suspended from the slender pillars, are lighted, and Turks of different ranks, in all the varieties of their rich costume, cover the platform, just above the surface of the river, on which, and on its foaming waterfalls, the moonlight rests, and the sound of music is heard, you fancy that if ever the Arabian Nights' enchantments are to be realized, it is here.

These cool and delightful places were our daily and favourite lounge : they are resorted to at all hours of the day. There are two or three coffee-houses constructed somewhat differently from the one just described. A low gallery divides the platform from the tide ; fountains

play on the floor, which is furnished with sofas and cushions ; and music and dancing always abound. Together with a pipe and coffee, they bring you two or three delicious sherbets, and fruit of some kind is also put into the vase presented you. In the middle of the river that rushed round one of these latter cafés, was a little island covered with verdure and trees, where you might go and sit for hours without once desiring a change of place.

The Arabian story-tellers often resort here ; their tales are frequently accompanied by a guitar ; the most eminent among them are Arabs. There are a few small coffee-houses more select, where the Turkish gentlemen often go, form dinner-parties, and spend the day.

We paid a visit to the Catholic convent one day, during which one of the Pacha's sons came with a numerous retinue ; he looked at the few curiosities of the place, and fixed his eyes on two large silver goblets, which put the fathers in a fever lest he should take a fancy to them. One of the gentlemen who accompanied him, and who was his tutor, made some extempore

poetry in praise of the establishment, and presented it to the superior, but it was very dull. Among the fathers was a very corpulent and zealous old man, who had an uncommon desire to make Michel a good Catholic. He invited him to his chamber one evening, and having placed a bottle of excellent cordial on the table, he began to remonstrate with great earnestness on the errors of the Greek church, in which the latter was brought up; who listening with great acquiescence, the bottle of cordial and the conference were finished nearly at the same time, both leaving the father not a little elevated with a sense of his own eloquence, for Michel had not spared tears on the occasion.

The Pacha of Damascus was a mild and humane man, and the people appeared very happy under his government. The system of the Porte, however, of changing these officers every three years, prevents any enduring good effects being derived from the best administration. There are no spectacles, or public amusements of any kind, in the city. The pilgrimage to Mecca

must do the Turks good even in this life, if it only causes a vivid excitement in their minds, and serves them to think of and talk about all their life after. It is a strong proof of their obedience and regard to the Prophet's laws, that amidst a life so apathetic, and so many hours of which are consumed in devotion, they should have existed more than twelve hundred years without the slightest inclination to idolatry, or the smallest excitement to the senses in their religion. What a contrast between the mind and practice of the Turk and the Jew!—the one having enjoyed the knowledge of the true faith, the other but the imitation of it: both carried the conquering sword into idolatrous nations: both received the same solemn warnings against imitating them, and yet what a different result.

There are several charitable establishments in the city, in which provisions are distributed to the poor, and medicines to the sick: one of these is a spacious and magnificent building. The Turkish gentlemen are very fond of riding in

their superb plain; towards the east its vast level affords a fine area, and walking is far more practised here than in the capitals of Egypt or Turkey, from the attractions, no doubt, of the promenades around the walls. On the north-west is the fine and lonely mountain of Ashloón, near which passes the road to Palmyra. We had an ardent desire to visit this ruin; but one or two serious obstacles prevented it. The great number of tall palm and cypress trees in the plain of Damascus, add much to its beauty, particularly in the village of Salehiéh, where we spent some hours in the handsome house of a rich man, who allowed it to be hired during the day for the reception of strangers. The large saloon was a beautiful apartment, opening into a small and delightful garden, through which ran a cool and rapid stream. The windows looked towards the plain and city; some of the houses, in the abundance of the luxury of water, have small and handsome reservoirs in their gardens, whose sides are neatly walled and shaded, and into which fountains play.

A good and handsome house can be hired by a traveller at a low rent ; and this will be found the most independent and agreeable mode of residence. The great drawback in this, as in most other oriental abodes, is the want of society. In a visit of a few weeks this cannot be felt ; but in a protracted stay of years, as in a few instances, a man's soul, as well as body, must be orientalized. Yet who can leave the superb climates and scenes of the East, without joining in the eloquent and just lament of Anastasius, when gazing on them for the last time, as he sailed for Europe to revisit them no more. Early associations also may contribute to the impassioned and romantic remembrances which an eastern journey never fails to leave behind. The transition from the garden to the wilderness—the shadow and repose of the tent in a cheerless and burning plain—the desert fountain and palm—the kind welcome in the wild, and the devotions of its people, offered up in the stillness of its scenery—these are the living and vivid pictures which delighted our

early imaginations, and the only ones Nature presented to the first ages of mankind, and to the patriarchs and prophets who were the favourites of Heaven.

The appearance of the Arabs who enter the city is picturesque. We one day met a procession of chiefs, who had come from the deserts on a visit of ceremony to the Pacha. They were well mounted, and were mostly slender men, with expressive features, and piercing black eyes. Their cloaks were of cotton, with various coloured stripes, and they wore light yellow turbans; they seemed out of place, and looked as if they would much rather be making a dash at the city, than paying a visit of ceremony.

The women are frequently seen walking in the bazaars; they universally wear a white cloak, (which covers also the upper part of the head like a hood,) and shoes and slippers; the latter, as is the custom of the men, are worn within the former, which are always left at the door of the apartment. They often appear out



in small boots of yellow leather, and do not, in the streets, seem quite such hideous figures as in Stamboul and Cairo. The tunic, or short vest, is often richly embroidered; in winter it is of cloth, with an edging, even at the wrists, of white fur; the pantaloon invariably worn is of silk, fancifully adorned or spangled, and fastened by a sash round the inner vest: over these is worn the robe. The blue eye is unknown among the Turkish ladies, and a few of their jet black locks are generally suffered to fall beneath the turban. Their hands are beautifully small and white, and adorned with rings, and bracelets also on the wrists. No support to the bosom is ever used. The dress altogether, although it hides much of the symmetry and beauty of the figure, gives it a grand and imposing air, particularly the elegant cashmere turban, of which European ladies, if they possess it, spoil the effect, by not knowing how to put it on.

We now resolved to conclude our stay here, and visit the ruins of Balbec; and taking

leave of the kind family at whose residence we had passed so many agreeable hours, we set out, with a guide and horses, at an early hour, towards the mountains to the north of the city.

## LETTER XX.

## BALBEC.

ON the summit of the mountains we stopped to take a farewell view of the celebrated plain at our feet, and then advanced over a barren tract, till we came to a spot watered by one or two rivers, and shaded with trees. These luxurious retreats are often resorted to by the inhabitants of the city. The road afterwards wound through wild and rocky defiles in the mountains, and by the steep side of a rapid torrent that flowed over its course beneath, till, towards evening, we came into a plain, and passed the night in the cottage of a peasant. The next day was uncommonly fine, and we pursued our way in good spirits. The aspect of the country was more agreeable than on the

preceding day, and the cottages were more numerously scattered.

Soon after sunset we came to Zibolané, a large village, finely situated, and surrounded with groves; and a river ran through the middle of it. The habitation of one of the villagers was again our home: they spread their best mat on the floor, in the midst of which the fire burned bright and cheerfully, and prepared a good supper of fowls and eggs, followed by coffee and the chibouque; and we found the luxuries of Damascus had not spoiled our relish of this simple and friendly reception.

Demetrie, the servant of Mr. G., was a bigoted Greek, and true to his country, though not a little of a rogue, and a great gourmand. Every evening, he said his prayers to the Virgin, accompanied with crossings, which, after the Greek fashion, were drawn from his chin to his middle; and the constant subject of his prayers was, that the Virgin would give him plenty to eat and drink, and send him home safe to his family.

On the third day we came to the ruins of Balbec, which, being approached from Damascus, are not seen till you are almost close on them. The village adjoining is very mean, and contains a few hundred inhabitants: it has a mosque and minaret. This place was situated just between the limits of the rival pachas, and was under the jurisdiction of neither. We made our way to the wretched residence of a Greek priest, who looked the picture of squalidness and poverty, and resides in this lonely spot to minister to two or three score of Christians. He drew a key out of his pocket, and unlocked with great care a waste and dark apartment a few yards from his own.

We soon sallied out to visit the temple, but were encountered about half way by the governor or sheik of the village, who, with much clamour, refused to allow us to proceed till he understood who we were. We accordingly walked back; and in a short time he made his appearance at the priest's, accompanied by an armed soldier, and a number of the villagers gathered round. The sheik demanded money

for permission to see the ruins ; and after much altercation, and violent threats on his side, the sum was reduced to twenty-seven piastres, on receiving which he went away, and troubled us no more.

The sun set on the vast temple, and the mountains around it, with indescribable grandeur : the chain of Anti-Libanus in front was covered with snow ; and the plain, wild and beautiful, stretched at its feet farther than the eye could reach. The pigeons, of many-coloured plumage, flew in clusters around the ruined walls, at whose feet were a variety of trees and flowers, amidst which ran a clear and rapid stream. The outer wall, that incloses the great area of the building to the north, is immensely high, and about six hundred feet long ; the western wall is lower, being more broken ; and mid-way of its height are the three enormous stones, about sixty feet long and twelve wide. The temple itself is near one hundred and eighty feet in length, and half that in width, and is surrounded by a single row of pillars, forty-four in number, nearly sixty feet

high, and twenty-six' feet in circumference: they are, as well as the temple, of a fine granite of a light red colour; their capitals are of the Corinthian order, of exquisite workmanship, and are very little defaced: indeed, the entireness and preservation of the decorations of this superb temple are surprising. The architrave and cornice are beautifully carved; three or four of these columns, separated from the roof, recline against the wall of the temple; and, on the south side, one noble pillar has sunk from its position into the clear and beautiful pool formed by the fountain beneath the temple, against the body of which half its length and rich capital still support themselves.

The magnificence of this corridor can scarcely be imagined. Its western aspect is towards the plain; and at your feet lie masses of broken pillars, capitals, and friezes, over which you must pass to approach the temple. From the north you look down on the vast area within the walls, the sides of which are lined with ruined chambers, elegantly carved and adorned, and numerous niches for statues, now, how-

ever, empty. The south hangs over the fountain and sheet of water below, in whose bosom it is clearly reflected. The interior of the building is above a hundred and twenty feet long, but is narrow in proportion to its length. In the sides of the walls is a double row of pilasters, and between these are numerous niches, where statues formerly stood. In many parts of the temple, around the place of entrance, and on the roof of the corridor, are sculptured in an exquisite manner figures of the heathen deities, of the eagle with outspread wings, &c. The roof of the interior is entirely gone.

The hands of the natives have, no doubt, committed many ravages here. Faccardine, prince of the Druses, destroyed or injured several parts of these ruins; but when he afterwards visited Italy, and contracted a taste for its architecture, he bitterly lamented the sacrilege he had committed at Balbec. The Turks have, without doubt, used it as a fortification, as they have made additions to some parts of the walls, and left many vestiges of their barbarian



architecture, blended with the colossal remains of the temple.

About a hundred feet from this edifice is a row of Corinthian pillars, much loftier and more slender than those of the great corridor; they stand alone, on an elevated site, and their rich capitals and architrave are still entire. Six only now remain, and their appearance is peculiarly elegant. On them the setting sun lingers the last of all the ruin; and their slender and dark red shafts, beheld at some distance in the purple light, as they stand high and aloof, have a solemn and shadowy appearance,—as if they stood on the tomb of former greatness.

On the south-east side, nearer to the village, is a small circular building of marble, richly ornamented with sculpture, and supported by pillars. It is in a rather ruinous condition, but appears quite unconnected with the mass of buildings adjoining. Its roof, in the form of a dome, though shattered, is still standing.

About a mile down the plain is the quarry from which the enormous stones used in the

construction of Balbec were hewn. One still remains, the chief part smoothed and prepared with great labour for building, but adhering by one of its sides to the native rock : it is of a coarse granite, and its dimensions are much superior to either of the three great stones in the middle of the wall. The labour of removing such enormous masses, and then of elevating them to so great a height, must have been immense ; how the latter could have been achieved is marvellous. A few of the smaller pillars appear to be of a solid piece of coarse marble ; but the large columns are composed of three or four pieces of the native material.

Covered galleries, several hundred feet in length, the walls of prodigious thickness, are hollowed beneath the temple. The interior of the temple was divided into three aisles, but most of the pillars which formed them are destroyed : at the upper end, a few steps lead to the altar, or sacred place ; but the idol formerly adored here is gone from its place, which, however, is adorned with a variety of beautiful sculpture. Exposed as this roofless temple has

been for so many ages to every storm, it is surprising the decorative parts of it have not suffered more; but the shafts of many of the pillars without, which face the north-east, have been rent and hollowed in some parts.

At Balbec, as at other eastern ruins, a traveller must luxuriate on the pleasures of imagination, for he will get no luxury more substantial. The darkness and misery of the good father's habitation were extreme: his hair hung long and bushy like that of a Santon; and his whole garb and person looked as if water had long been a stranger to them. He stood in extreme fear of the Turkish governor.

Before sunrise in the morning we were at the ruin, and the spectacle soon was magnificent. As the purple light covered the snowy mountains in front, the line of vapour at their feet had so entirely the appearance of a river, that we could not, for some time, persuade ourselves it was not so. The description in Lalla Rookh of the plain and its ruins is exquisitely faithful; the minaret is on the declivity near at hand, and there wanted only the muezzin's cry

to break the silence. The golden light now rested on the six lone and beautiful pillars, and gradually sank on the temple, and the various portals and broken masses that crowded the area around it.

We left Balbec towards evening, and proceeded over the extensive plain; which, in a few hours, afforded some pleasing scenes of villages, and cultivated fields around them. We then again ascended the hills: the road became barren and wild; and the light had for some time left us, when we arrived at a long and straggling mountain-village, the inhabitants of which were very civil and friendly. We were accommodated in a hut, which, however, was very clean, and the walls white-washed. The wine which the good fathers of the monastery had given us had been finished long since, and we were fain to make some wretched stuff the villagers brought serve as a substitute. Numbers of the people crowded around us, and the fumes of their eternal pipes filled the apartment.

Before sunrise we quitted the village, and ascended some of the loftiest parts of Lebanon.

The clouds gathered around us; the air became very chill; and about mid-day we reached a lonely habitation, in the rocky path, and were glad to find a fire kindled, and the cup of coffee ready to be offered. How could these people have lived before the discovery of this beverage—the elixir, the universal solace, the champagne of the East? In the most desolate khan it is put to your lips, and it is considered strange if you ever pass by and refuse it.

As the clouds dispersed at intervals, glimpses of wild and varied scenery were enjoyed; regions of rocks and precipices, mingled villages, and an abundant verdure. In the evening we arrived at a small and wretched khan, that had previously been taken possession of by a caravan that had halted just before. After much altercation and difficulty, we procured room to lie down and sleep; and the morning light was welcome that awoke us to pursue our journey to Beirout. The path now became more rich and verdant; and, descending a steep and narrow road, we beheld with joy the harbour and sweet gardens of the town far beneath.

Proceeding to the residence of Mr. A. the Consul, we received a warm and hospitable reception; and spent a few days with him with great pleasure. We still entertained some thoughts of visiting Palmyra; but the war was kept up between the Pachas with more animosity than ever. Two or three times we had met bodies of soldiers in the service of the Prince of the Druses, proceeding to the scene of action: they were well armed, but marched in a tumultuous manner. It was indeed a mockery of warfare; but the effects fell heavily on the poor peasantry, as on one occasion we saw near two thousand sheep collected together, plundered from the natives by orders of the Prince of Acre. It was said that the Porte, wearied with the excesses of this young tyrant, had sent the Capidgé Bashi for his head, but, like his ancestor Dejezzar, he kept on his guard, and refused to see the messenger.

In the midst of these disorders, Lady S—— remained perfectly secure; no hand ever dared move against her tranquillity, or breath of re-

proach be raised. The missionaries hoped to enlist her in their cause,—and powerful indeed would have been her interference; but from some unfortunate casualty, or misunderstanding, the minister for the conversion of the Jews incensed her beyond forgiveness. Her favour in this land is better than the smiles of princes; but not so her anger. She ordered the servant of the missionary to be roundly chastised by her dragoman, and wrote to his master a letter, which commenced thus: “It is astonishing that you should have dared to direct your steps to my residence; you, who have left a religion sublime, though defective, for that which is only a shadow.” He was the son of a Rabbi, but had embraced Christianity.

In this war of the Pachas, the Greeks have been great sufferers. Many who had fled from the Morea, as well as those who dwelt in the country, had placed their effects, for better security, in some of the convents in the mountains. The chiefs of Acre and the Druses, having intelligence of this, sent some bodies of soldiers,

who, in spite of the remonstrances of the monks, carried off all the booty, which was very rich.

We found an acquaintance, Mr. J. the English merchant, from Smyrna, in great trouble. His servant, a Greek, and quite a youth, was a good-looking fellow, and had grown a great favourite with some of the single, and some of the married women of the place; and, to support his expenses, he plundered his master during his absence in Damascus, and dashed away to his heart's content. Not long after, he was arrested, and lodged in prison. One or two Moslems persuaded him to change his religion: he forthwith assumed the turban, and with it his liberty; and in his new dress was seen walking about the streets, free from all inquisition for his knavery, and his prospects brighter than ever.

The custom which the women of Lebanon have had from time immemorial, of wearing a silver horn on their heads, does not extend to Beirout: this horn is often a foot and half high, with a variety of uncouth figures carved on it, and it is fastened by a silken string. They generally carry their veils over it, and let them



fall on one side of the face, which has a graceful and theatrical appearance.

A circumstance took place here that amused us a good deal. A genteel, but rather wild-looking young Swiss one day came to the Consul's: he appeared very fatigued and care-worn, and happy to find a place of refuge, for he was just arrived from the mountains. The history of this poor gentleman affords a striking picture of religious enthusiasm in its highest excess. He had been, he said, a great profligate in his own country, but had been reclaimed by the preaching of the celebrated Madame Krudener, and soon after considered it his duty to go and preach the gospel in the lands from which it was first promulgated: in fine, to turn the Arabs and the Orientals in general to Christianity. He landed at Alexandria, and, his money being exhausted, Mr. Lee, the consul, gave him a small supply. With this he found his way by sea to Acre, and then wandered up the country towards the mountains. He found no one who cared to listen to his addresses, or to show him hospitality; owing, perhaps, to two reasons,

that his finances were low, and that he knew not a word of the language; the latter he intended quickly to acquire. But one fine afternoon he came to a grove of trees in some part of Lebanon, in one of which was a girl gathering fruit. She was either handsome, or her dress attracted his attention; and, being very near-sighted, he stood at the foot of the tree with his spectacles on, gazing intently upwards. The girl, who had never seen a pair of spectacles before, became alarmed, and cried out; when two young men, who were at work not far off, came up, and charged him with using magical arts on the girl, as they had observed his spectacles and fixed gaze. They beat him unmercifully, and plundered him of all the money he had left; and in this plight he found his way to the consul at Beirout. We persuaded him to quit his projects of evangelizing the natives, and turn his face homewards without delay; and, being reinforced with a little cash, this young enthusiast set off next day; and we afterwards heard he had reached Alexandria, but whether he bent his

course back to Switzerland, and finally relinquished his plans, we never learned.

This was a premature and unsuccessful attempt ; but too much caution cannot be used in the efforts, now so general and admired, to reclaim the people of the East from their errors and superstitions. The cunning and knavery of the Syrians will often prove an overmatch for the simplicity of the missionary. Father T., in Jerusalem, is one proof of this ; and there were two brothers of Mount Lebanon, clever and designing fellows both of them, who agreed to be baptized, and become useful agents, on the promise of some hundred pounds, to be paid them by a wealthy and zealous supporter of the cause. The noted Eusebius, bishop of Mount Lebanon, came to England about six years ago to set forth the dark and distressed state of the Syrian Christians : he was chaperoned through many of the colleges at Oxford, by one of the masters ; and was made much of by some ministers, though mistrusted by others. His short stature, his red hair and beard, were any thing

but prepossessing ; but he interested the feelings and hopes of numbers, by his affecting details of the desolation of his country, and finally set off with a capital printing-press for printing copies of the Testament, and about eight hundred pounds in money. When we were at Sidon, we found that this eastern dignitary was living in a style of excessive comfort, and to his heart's content, at a few hours' distance. With this money, which was a fortune in the East, he has purchased a good house and garden ; not one farthing had ever gone to renovate the condition of the Christians of the East, and the printing-press, or some fragments of it, were known to have found their way to Alexandria.

A Roman Count, Signor ———, arrived at Beirout a few days ago. He came all the way from Rome, for the sole object of seeing Balbec. At the age of seventy, and without any companion, the poor old man had need of all his enthusiasm to support him under the fatigues of the journey. He had landed first at Cyprus, where he was almost immediately seized with a fever that confined him two months. As soon as

he was recovered, he took passage for Beirout, and arrived in safety. His conversation was full of energy and fire when speaking of the ruined temple he was about to visit, which he looked forward to with the same delight and hope as the pilgrim of the Desert does to the holy dome of Mecca. He set out in a few days ; but we left Beirout too early to know if his journey was prosperous or not, or whether any of the straggling detachments of soldiery had intercepted him.

My old acquaintance W. had less of the spirit of curiosity, who spent three weeks at Cairo, and never went to see the pyramids. But his enthusiasm and zeal were directed to a different object. He set out one morning from Beirout in a deluge of rain, contrary to our persuasion, to climb the heights of Lebanon, in order to try to make a good Christian of the Prince of the Druses. The latter, "all things to all men," received him with much civility, listened attentively to his impassioned discourse, and assented, with looks of gravity and wisdom, to the perfect truth of it. He drank coffee and smoked the

chibouque with his guest, and ordered dinner to be prepared for him. W. left the palace with feelings little short of rapture at the success of his visit, and travelled over the rocky paths and defiles of the mountain for a long time, till he lost his way. It was an evening in January, and it quickly became dark ; the rain fell in torrents, and the wind blew with extreme violence, when the guide perceived the light of a solitary cottage amidst the wild acclivities. Fatigued, and drenched to the skin, W. found a friendly reception from the owner, who was a Maronite, and who soon spread before him some coarse fare. Another traveller, who chanced to be a Greek monk, soon after arrived ; and the trio assembled with great good will round a fire that burned cheerfully in the middle of the floor. It so happened, that the subject of religion, and the state of the churches in the East, was introduced : it was throwing down the gauntlet. The Maronite maintained the superior purity of his own doctrines—the Greek treated him as little better than a schismatic—and W. forgetting in a moment his extreme fatigue and ex-

haustion, descanted with great earnestness on the unhappy errors in which they were both involved. The storm, that raged furiously without, interrupted them not, and hour after hour fled away, till the dawn of morning, ere they thought of retiring to rest ; and he complained on his return, of the obstinacy and difficulty of conviction of his fellow travellers.

The snow still rested on the interior summits of Lebanon ; around which the air was extremely cold, and the habitations few. “ The forests, the cedar trees, the glory of Lebanon,” as Scripture speaks of them, have, in a great measure, disappeared, to make way for innumerable plantations of vines. No mountain in or around Palestine retains its ancient beauty so much as Carmel. Two or three villages, and some scattered cottages, are found on it ; its groves are few, but luxuriant : it is no place for crags and precipices, or “ rocks of the wild goats,” but its surface is covered with a rich and constant verdure. In one of our visits to it, we had wandered for the whole day, and arrived late and fatigued at a cottage, that promised the

rudest fare and lodging. But we were agreeably disappointed, when the dirty floor of the naked apartment was covered with a small but handsome carpet and cushions, and a repast, consisting of delicious honey and clouted cream, as used in the west of England, was set before us, with coffee and the pipe, and the whole was seasoned with the kindest welcome. This was a convincing proof that all was not barren in the land of promise, and that the traveller's step is not repulsed from its inhospitable doors.



## LETTER XXI.

LADY HESTER STANHOPE.

OUR second residence at Beirout was much more agreeable than the former, as the weather was now uniformly fine and clear, without any oppressive heat. The climates of Italy and Greece are both very inferior to that of the coast of Syria; which is free from the severe and frequent changes of the former, and the extreme cold which winter often gives to the latter. The rainy season, which lasts only a few weeks, is the only inconvenience a traveller experiences on the Syrian coast; and very many lives would no doubt be annually saved, if a portion of the consumptive patients so constantly sent to the south of France and Italy, where the often

piercing winds hurry them to the grave, were landed in this healthy country.

The recluses of the convents, so thickly scattered over Mount Lebanon, have reason to bless their lot : the taste they have shown in the choice of many of their situations, is admirable ; the most extensive and superb scenery, both of sea, and land, is at their feet. The great number of old men you see in this region proves the healthiness of the air. Among the Druses, in particular, the many fine and venerable figures arrest the admiration of the traveller.

Emir Busheer, the prince of the Druses, has decided the event of the war between the Pachas, by the numerous hardy troops he has sent into the field. This man is a crafty and ambitious prince ; and though now old, maintains, by his crimes and his policy, an extensive and arbitrary power. In the quarrels of the Turkish Pachas with each other, his aid is anxiously sought by both. But this time the young Pacha of Acre had bribed him with a beautiful handjar, whose hilt was studded with diamonds,

and a sum of money, to send ten thousand of his mountain-troops into the field to his assistance. We often met these troops, on foot or on horseback, proceeding to the scene of action: they accosted us civilly, and were much better company to meet than the soldiers of Acre, who always looked as if they longed to plunder us. Indeed, where men are so much in the habit of cutting off noses, ears, and heads, at the fancy of their master, a taste for violent deeds is not to be wondered at. A woman one morning, during our stay at Acre, seeing the soldiers enter with the heads of some unfortunate fellows they had killed, upbraided them with their cowardice and cruelty, in murdering the innocent peasants, and producing their heads as those of their enemies, in order to gain the offered reward. This was, no doubt, the truth. The round number of piastres which was the price for every head of an enemy, made many a guiltless cottager lose <sup>his</sup> ~~their~~.

The Emir Busheer was very fond of the English, and talked a great deal, when we visited him, of Sir Sydney Smith, in whose ship he

had sailed several days on a cruise, and was quite delighted with the frank and generous spirit of the commander: the novelty of the expedition had left an ineffaceable impression on his mind. Of Lady Hester Stanhope he has the most unqualified admiration. She formerly came sometimes to visit him, and, springing from her Arab horse, walked without ceremony into the palace, with her riding-whip in hand, and in her Mameluke dress. The old man received the Queen of the East, as she has been named, with delight. "Come, my child," he said, "to visit me whenever it is your pleasure: use no ceremony with me, for my palace is your home, and your presence is to me as the light of the sun." The regard and respect paid to this lady by the chiefs of the East, both old and young, the powerful as well as the weak, are invariable. The Cadi at Beirout spoke of her with a veneration next to what he would have used when naming the Prophet or the Sultan. The young Pacha of Acre, desperate and lawless, filling the country around with bloodshed and exactions of every kind, pays

instant deference to a billet <sup>from</sup> of her. It is not boundless wealth that creates their admiration; for her income, till a handsome legacy was left her about three years ago, did not exceed 1500*l.* a year. It is not the fascination of beauty, that operates so powerfully on the natives of the East; for her person is plain and masculine, and her character pure and unspotted. Inquire of a Turk respecting her conduct, and he will lift up his hand and declare her uniformly to be the most noble, virtuous, and excellent of women. Already in the vale of life, and in a state of "single blessedness," she cannot contemplate with temper the joys of domestic union; and like our maiden queen of excellent memory, she has the most sovereign dislike to see any of her followers or attendants yoked together in matrimony.

A young man of Beirout, with whom we were acquainted, of the name of Massad, served her ladyship in the quality of dragoman. He was very clever, had been in England, and spoke its language well: he was employed to do all the commissions for Marilius in the

neighbouring towns, and, knowing the rogueries of his countrymen, was very useful to the establishment. He was very good-looking, and well-informed; and having handsome wages, with not a great deal to do, found his place much to his satisfaction. The only European in the establishment was a Miss W. a companion and dependant of her ladyship's. All the English servants had been shipped off, bag and baggage, with little warning, a good while before; as their mistress found their English tastes and habits so ill accorded with her Arab ones, and gave her so much annoyance, that she sent them all home, determining never to have an English servant again. It so happened, and it was perfectly natural, that young Massad and the young lady formed an attachment for each other. In her isolated situation there was no other object possessed of the least attraction, save the Arab sheik or the Turkish gentleman, who sometimes came to Marilius to pay their homage to its mistress; but they spoke a strange language, and their manners were too oriental for English feelings. Confiding too

much in their mistress's indulgence, Massad and the young lady were imprudent enough to request her approbation of their attachment, and her consent to their being united and still retaining their situations under her roof. This announcement kindled at once her indignation: the too sanguine dragoman was bereaved of his sabre, which he had received as a present, and instantly dismissed from his office and the house, with, however, a handsome present;—and the unfortunate Miss W. felt her residence afterwards less enviable than it had formerly been.

Pale and dispirited, removed from all society congenial to her wishes and feelings, her situation was not to be envied; but, ere twelve months had elapsed, the scene at Marilius looked more cheerful; old grievances were forgotten; the dragoman was recalled to his situation, and “the clouds of displeasure no longer sat heavy on the brow.”

The desire of some travellers to see the inmate of Marilius has been so strong as to induce them to brave the danger of a repulse.

A German baron, famed for his knowledge of horses, in which he prided himself much, begged the honour of an interview : her ladyship only replied by ordering the groom to lead out her stud of horses for his inspection. An unfortunate quarrel with an eminent English traveller, who spent some weeks at her house, is assigned, and perhaps justly, as the cause of her closing her doors against her countrymen. His opinion respecting her present habits of life was too unguardedly expressed after he had quitted her residence ; and his satirical observations, finding their way to England, and being thence communicated to Marilius, determined its owner to admit no more of her injudicious countrymen.

Her residence in this country was entirely the effect of accident : the vessel in which she sailed being shipwrecked on the coast, she was so much struck with the beauty of the country and climate, as to resolve to make it her residence. Had she foreseen that a few years would rob her of her hardihood of body and daring of mind, and confine her, nervous and dispirited, to the



solitude of Marilius, she surely would never have made it her place of refuge. What resting-place can such a spot be for her powerful mind, that once took part in the highest councils of the state, during her residence with her uncle, and exercised, it is said, no small influence on the destinies of Europe? It was perhaps the total change in her situation caused by the death of that great minister—the passing from his society and confidence to that of other spirits, who assimilated but little with her own masculine and capricious mind—and also her not being on cordial terms with many of the members of her family, joined to her passion for enterprise and travel, that led her altogether to withdraw from a world whose smiles were now in part changed into coldness and indifference. On much of the society in which she then mingled, comprising the most talented and elevated characters of the day, she sometimes takes pleasure in dwelling, in terms either of keen satire or of unqualified eulogy. Her eloquence in conversation is considerable, when she is animated with the subject, though her voice is neither very melodious nor

feminine; and when roused, which is but rare, to anger, it may be said (in the eastern expression) that "her wrath is terrible."

An Englishman whom we knew at Beirout, was fortunate enough to obtain an interview, on account of his being intimate with a rich Turk, who had long been a friend and visitor of her ladyship's. The Turk wrote to request the honour, and it was immediately granted. The Englishman returned to Beirout the next day, perfectly delighted. He had arrived at Marilius in the evening, and was served with supper by the numerous retinue, according to the English style, with a table, knives, forks, &c. His turban was arranged by the major domo in the Mameluke style, and about eleven at night he was introduced to her ladyship. She was reclining on a sofa, extremely well, but plainly, dressed in the Turkish fashion, with a red shawl turban on her head, slippers on her feet, a handsome sash round her waist, over which was a loose robe.

She conversed very affably, particularly on the state of the country, filled at this time with

discord and bloodshed by the war between the two Pachas. She spoke of it in terms of apprehension and uneasiness, and dissuaded him strongly from prosecuting his journey to the Syrian capital ; and expressed her belief that the Turkish empire was hastening rapidly to destruction ; but gave, or procured him, however, letters for the Pacha of Damascus, which were afterwards of the highest service to him.

Few prospects can be more lonely and melancholy than the one before her, of passing the remainder of her life, and closing it, in a country perpetually torn by tumults, plunders, and deeds of cruelty, with not a friend to confide in, not one bosom of affection to lean on for comfort or sympathy. Of all the ordinances of the Christian religion, an inhabitant of this country is of course obliged to live entirely destitute. In her conversation with the Englishman, she discovered the most intimate knowledge of the various governments of the East, and of their wayward policy.

The interview lasted several hours ; the latter part of it, however, was a mute one on the part

of the visitor, for the conversation happened to turn on the policy of England, as directed by her idolized uncle. She instantly drew, with enthusiasm, a vivid and beautiful picture of that individual, such a one as it was impossible to wish to interrupt. Start but this subject, indeed, in her company, and you may fold your arms, and sit in a posture of fixed attention for a couple of hours, while a torrent of eloquence portrays the designs, the powers, and virtues of that exalted spirit. The greater part of her long night, as she never retires to rest till five in the morning, is occupied with reading, or with her numerous correspondence; for like all recluses, though cut off from the world, its news is still dear to her. Even in the intelligence and petty events of the surrounding neighbourhood, she often takes a lively interest.

Like Christina of Sweden, conscious of the powerful resources of her own mind, she looks on the scenes of past gaiety or dignity with little regret; and regards with the same disdain the manners and tastes of most of her own sex, whom she considers as in a too dependant, weak,

and unimportant condition of society. Few of them, indeed, possess her strength of nerve, or capacity of enduring fatigue. An admirable horse-woman herself, it was long before she could persuade her English companion to ride *à l'amazon*, though she assured her, if she did not, she would quickly break her neck in the rugged mountain paths. This nearly chanced to be the case one day. Miss ——— narrowly escaped being thrown over a precipice, and ever since conforms to the eastern fashion. An Arab chief, who, during one of her journeys through the desert, pursued her with his party for fifteen hours, with scarcely any halt, could not overtake her. The quarrel being afterwards made up between this tribe and the one that conducted Lady Stanhope, in a subsequent journey they again encountered in the desert: her ladyship instantly rode up to the sheik, and demanded in an authoritative tone, how he dared pursue her on the former occasion, or presume to think of taking her. The Arab chief replied, that he well knew her rank, and that, had he made so illustrious a prisoner, he expected to have ob-

tained a large ransom, but that her speed had entirely disappointed him.

On one of the days of her residence at Palmyra, she gave a kind of fête to the Bedouins. The great sheik, with his tribe of Palmyrene Arabs, constantly resides at the ruin. Their habitations are fixed near the great temple; they are very well disposed, and civil in their manners, and their young women are remarkable, above all the other tribes, for their beauty. It was a lovely day, and the youth of both sexes, dressed in their gayest habiliments, were seated in rows on the fragments of the pillars, friezes, and other ruins with which the ground was covered. Her ladyship, in her eastern dress, walked among them, addressed them with the utmost affability, and ordered a dollar to be given to each. As she stood, with all that Arab array, amidst the columns of the great temple of the sun, the sight was picturesque and imposing; and the Bedouins hailed her, with the utmost enthusiasm, queen of Palmyra, queen of the Desert! and in their enthusiasm, would have proceeded to confer more decided marks of so-

vereignty; but they were declined. They speak of her now with the utmost veneration and respect. They also retain another mark of her bounty, one which, out of regard for her countrymen, she might well have spared. The great sheik received from her a paper, in her handwriting, in which she directs him to demand a thousand piastres of every traveller who visits the ruin. The sheik never fails to enforce this counsel, and displays the paper, with the addition, that the great lady, the queen, said that the English travellers were rich, and that they ought to pay well for the privilege of seeing Palmyra. This enormous tax, which it is impossible to escape, causes several travellers to leave Syria without seeing the finest ruin in the world. One indeed, of no small eminence, absolutely refused to pay it, telling the sheik, who drew the mandate from his bosom, that the great lady had no right whatever over his purse, and that she showed little wisdom in leaving such a mandate in his hands. He passed four days at Palmyra, and would have left it as wise as he came, if he had not made a com-

promise with the chief, and consented to pay half the sum. The Arabs, though they would not personally injure him, did not suffer him to leave the hut, and at last placed some wood and fagots round the walls, and, setting them on fire, filled the habitation of the traveller with such clouds of smoke, that he could neither breathe nor see, and was obliged to give way. This injudicious and needless written mandate from the noble visitor to the chief, will, no doubt, be handed down from sheik to sheik for many generations; and travellers for centuries to come will be doomed to see the ominous scroll produced, and the thousand piastres demanded, with the comment that it was given to their forefathers by the great lady from beyond the sea.

The old Arab soothsayer, or magician, who sometimes visits Marilius, is a singular being; his appearance, with his long beard and solemn and venerable aspect, being rather equivocal. He either deludes himself or his patroness, perhaps both, for his prophecies of oriental grandeur and dominion have, not seldom, been



willingly received. There is little doubt that her restless and romantic mind at times dwelt with pleasure on the idea of a power to be established in the East, of which she was to be the mistress:—a large fleet was to come from afar to aid this conquest, and her sceptre was to wave with equal glory to that of Zenobia who defended Palmyra. The Arab soothsayer has obtained considerable fame by his prophecy of the destruction of Aleppo by an earthquake, twelve months before it took place. The particulars of this prophecy, and the very words in which it was couched, have appeared in a religious publication a few months ago: they were very emphatic, and full of denunciations of wrath and terror, and struck a missionary who was at Aleppo at the time with all the force of truth. But superstition is the frequent weakness of powerful minds; the two first literary characters of the present day believing, it is said, in second sight. But the belief in nativities, or the influence of the stars, which is a prominent part of the creed of the noble owner of Marilius, is, perhaps, still more pre-

carious and unsatisfactory. Yet this research is pursued with eager interest and curiosity, and fills up many a solitary hour both by day and night. The particular star under whose influence some of her friends have been born, has been inquired after with avidity; and one who filled at that time a high diplomatic situation in the East at a considerable distance, told me he was intreated by letter to communicate what star chanced to preside over his birth.

The tranquil and elevated site of Marilius, once a monastery, but now converted into a handsome dwelling, is to be envied on a bright and beautiful night, such an one as is so often beheld in the East. The heavenly bodies, shining with excessive brilliancy, appear almost the only living and awakening objects around. No human habitation is nigh; the plain and town of Sidon are at a distance below, and no footstep dares approach the spot, except sent on a special embassy or communication. Indeed, three and twenty Arab servants, almost wholly men, are a retinue too formidable to be trifled with; and with the numerous stud of blood

Arabian horses, might form an escort fit for a Pacha. These horses have either been purchased or sent as presents by the Arab chiefs: a present not unprofitable to the owner, as the Beïouin who brings the courser is rewarded with a *douceur* of a thousand piastres. The generosity, indeed, of Lady Hester Stanhope knows no bounds, and is prodigiously admired by the Arabs, among whom it is considered a cardinal virtue. Extremely abstemious in her own habits, with a little tea and dry bread for breakfast, and some soup, with (the furthest that her luxury extends) a boiled chicken for dinner, the residence contains a store of the choicest wines and delicacies for her visitors. With the Arab sheik she sips coffee and smokes a pipe, seated on the carpet, and converses with oriental animation. The rich arms that are at times sent as presents to the various chiefs, are most acceptable to them; they prefer those of England to their own manufacture, but they look cold on them, except they are embossed in gold or silver. Large chests, full of English pistols and other arms, richly ornamented, are

sometimes sent to Marilius. One was waiting shipment at Alexandria a few months before for the same place, and was to be accompanied by a collection of tea-cups and saucers from that port, as the old stock was nearly exhausted.

As may be imagined, Lady Hester Stanhope is not very popular with the few European ladies settled in the East. One of them, a resident at Sidon, asserted that those peculiar manners and habits would lose half their charm to their possessor, if they ceased to excite notoriety. That she chanced to reside once for some weeks in the same house with her ladyship; and never manifesting the slightest curiosity or interest respecting her, the former became uneasy and displeased, and made many and pointed inquiries who the stranger was. This was a Frenchwoman's tale, prompted a little, perhaps, by envy, though this is the last passion the life of the noble recluse need excite in the bosom of a pretty woman. Indeed, the softer sex are seldom welcome visitors at the residence. When a nobleman and his lady, during their eastern travels, went there in the expectation of being

gratified with an interview with its illustrious tenant, they found she had flown, a few hours before their arrival, on one of her Arab coursers, leaving orders with the housekeeper to receive the visitors with the most attentive hospitality.

Yet the door that is often closed to the rich and curious, is ever open to the poor and distressed. It would fill many pages to detail every generous and noble action of the recluse. The sick are furnished with medicine, and the poor and wretched of the neighbourhood are never sent empty away.

If it be asked if the Orientals have derived any benefit from the residence of her ladyship among them, in point of information, or manners, &c. it may be replied in the negative. It was said at one time she was engaged in instructing and civilizing a tribe of Bedouins, and that these children of the sun were making rapid improvements. In the science of flattery, and a rooted veneration for gold and the hand that bestows it bountifully, these Syrians are equal to any of their fellow-creatures ; but

in all other respects they are, and will be, as the prophecy was spoken of them, "a wild and reckless people, and artful as the father of lies." The prince of the Druses received a Bible with thanks from a missionary who visited him, and a few days after sent a body of his troops to plunder one or two Greek monasteries. Perfectly tolerant in her religious sentiments, and surrounded by at least six or seven different creeds of Christianity, besides the Mussulman and the Druse, her ladyship shows no marked preference for one more than another; were it otherwise, Marilius would soon be inundated by Turkish santons, or imauns, Maronite, Greek, or Armenian priests. The Missionaries have tried of late to engage her powerful countenance in their cause, but in vain. Of the cause of the unhappy-Greeks she is a warm and decided supporter; and, more than once, she has stepped in between lawless oppression and those who were about to become its victims. Long will the English name receive additional veneration in the East on her account; and were the gates of Marilius but

thrown open to the reception of her countrymen, it would be the most luxurious resting-place, and her influence the surest safeguard, in the land of the East. Yet the strict etiquette preserved there, though unfelt by the stronger, falls not so lightly on the gentler sex. Two young ladies were invited, from a former friendship to the father, who was an English gentleman, to spend a few weeks at Marilius. They were delighted at the thoughts of so rare a privilege, and set out with anxious hearts. Their reception was most kind and friendly, and the first few days passed gaily away; but ungifted with the peculiar resources of their hostess, the hours soon began to move heavily. No amusements, no change of scene, often no sound but the wind moaning through the few trees on the summit of the hill. During the greater part of the day, the only faces they saw were Arab ones; at night, and not till then, they were admitted to an interview with her ladyship, seated *à la Turque*, in her Mameluke dress, who conversed with perfect good-humour, and ridiculed them sometimes for their effeminacies and weak-

nesses. They were not able to ride the mettled Arab coursers through mountain roads and passes, over which, without a skilful hand, a lady unaccustomed to the country might well break her neck. When any illustrious Turk or Arab showed his bearded face and turbaned head before the door, the two visitors, so far from having their curiosity indulged with an interview, were bidden to confine themselves closely to their chamber, and not to look through the window, lest the follower of the prophet might catch a glimpse of their features, and the strict etiquette of the place be thus violated; and they left it, as they told us after their return, with feelings like those of a nun leaving the walls of her monastery.

The other residence of Lady Stanhope is called Mar Abbas, and is situated further in the interior, and during the winter is a preferable situation to the one near Sidon, and has more wood to shelter it. When any infectious disorder prevails on the coast, she always retires there. At Jerusalem she lodged in the Catholic convent; and visited the Dead Sea and the



valley of the Jordan with a strong guard of Arabs. At the Lake of Tiberias, the rich old Jew, in whose house we lodged, told us, her ladyship was the only native of England whom his roof had received before: he spoke of her in high terms of admiration. She spent several days at the lake, to use the celebrated warm baths, about a mile from the town; and the natives beheld with astonishment her progress along the shores on her beautiful Arab charger, which she managed with the utmost skill. Had she lived in the days of chivalry, the East had heard the fame of more than one Clorinda. "What is your strength of arm or nerve?" she said to a young lady of my acquaintance, who visited her: "could they brave the burning heats and fatigues of the Desert, as mine have done?" It is strange her exploring spirit has never carried her to Mecca; as it is doubtful if the Turks, in the excess of their respect, would refuse her entrance, or venture to put their law in force, of decapitating the infidel who trespasses on the sacred territory. It would be a cruel and

posing question to put to a Turk or Arab of the neighbourhood, whether the "noble lady" could possibly be admitted into paradise by the law of the Koran that bars the gates against the tender sex : he would probably answer, after stroking his beard and looking dignified, " that the Prophet, who made the law, had power, on a particular occasion, to break it ;" or, as the governor of Beirout said to us, that " we should all be true believers together by and by."

The village of Antoura, where she resided for some time on her first arrival in the country, is finely situated, with its convent, on the declivity of Mount Lebanon, and, from its situation, must be remarkably healthy. The celebrated Wortley Montague resided here during a visit he made to this country, and was delighted with the situation ; although the object of his stay here was neither a laudable nor an honourable one. His beautiful mother would have smiled at sight of the situation of Marius, and wondered what could make such a residence agreeable, *sans société, sans l'amour*. There is indeed scarcely a parallel to be found

of a retirement like this of Lady Stanhope. There have been a few women, and of talent, who have surrendered the manners and *ugremens* of their own sex, but have cultivated assiduously the superior society, as they called it, of the other ; and some, who have rushed to religious seclusion, have found their recompense in the enthusiasm they have cherished there, and in the brilliant hopes it has inspired ; but here, with no food for vanity, amidst unlettered and mindless pachas and sheiks only—cut off from the civilized world—the spirit must be powerful that can exult in such a path, and continue in it to the last in tranquillity, and without a sigh or regret !

## LETTER XXII.

## CYPRUS.

HAVING resolved to take a passage to Cyprus, we set sail on a fine afternoon from Beirout in a small boat, crowded with passengers, reckoning only on a passage of twenty-four hours. Four nights and five days passed over us in this wretched boat, which had no cabin but a dark hole sufficient for one person to drag himself into, and the space without was crammed with bales of merchandize. The weather was very hot, our water fell short, and the distress of the poor passengers, among whom were many women and children, was dreadful.

We were becalmed at last off a desolate part of the island, and two or three of the crew were

sent on shore for some water, and in a few hours returned with a plentiful supply. The joy of the people on board was excessive, and they drank the water tumultuously, as if they were never to drink again ; those who were unable to rise lifting up their heads with rapture, while the stream was poured into their lips by others.

On the fifth day we entered the port of Larnica, and proceeded to the house of the consul for England, M. Vondiziani, a Greek, to whom we had letters of introduction. This friendly and amiable man made his house quite a home to us : he was a widower, had five sweet children, and was perfectly domestic in his habits. He allotted us apartments commanding extensive views of the country, where we were served with breakfast in the English style, and his table was covered with a variety of dishes at mid-day and at eight in the evening.

The country around Larnica is perfectly naked and rugged, and the climate sultry and unwholesome. The consuls for the different

European nations reside here, and their houses are fitted up in a good style. With the exception of some patches of verdure in what are called the gardens of some of the houses, the territory around is destitute of shade, and the ground parched with heat. In the apartments of the consul's house, the sun was excluded; but for several hours in the day the heat in the streets was insupportable.

The island was at this time in a state of deceitful tranquillity; the massacres of the Greeks were for a while partially suspended, only to be renewed with greater fury. At the consul's table each day appeared an unfortunate Greek family, who resided in his house, and received from him the utmost kindness. It consisted of a widow in the prime of life, her eldest son, a fine young man, and two or three children. The father, who was a rich Greek boyar, had been murdered, and all his effects confiscated. This poor lady was most anxious for every detail of the war, and to know if the English would assist her oppressed country.

The governor of the island was a brutal and savage character ; and the Greek monks trembled at his threats to destroy and ransack their monasteries. The fathers were most unfortunately situated in this war : timid from their habits, they saw only certain destruction in store ; or else girded on a sword and joined the ranks, in which they cut but a sorry figure. Several priests had been slain a short time before our arrival ; and one evening, while sitting quietly in the consul's parlour, an unhappy Greek was shot at the door, while passing along, by a Turkish soldier.

The island having been placed under the Pacha of Egypt's protection, he sent a body of soldiers to defend it ; who not long after mutinied, for want of pay. They resolved, about two thousand in number, to march to Larnica, seize on some vessels, and embark for Egypt. The intelligence reached us at Larnica on the evening of their approach : the greatest consternation instantly prevailed ; the Austrian consul shipped off his most valuable effects, and went on board with his family. As the troops

would arrive in the night, a general scene of pillage and tumult was likely to take place. The consul was most alarmed for his children, two or three of whom were pretty girls ; and having mustered all the arms and domestics in the upper apartment, whose windows fronted the street, we took post there before dark, assured that the Turks would not stand more than one volley from a defensive position like this ; and Mons. V.'s little garrison, mustering more than a dozen people well armed, made no contemptible appearance.

Report said, the mutineers were only a few miles from the town : the women were dreadfully alarmed ; but hour after hour passed away quietly, and we found in the morning that they had altered their course, and gone to Famagousta. A few stragglers only arrived, one of whom was shot in a quarrel by his comrade the same evening. At the latter town they committed several excesses, but were quieted at last, by the interference of their commander, and promises of pay.

In the course of the revolution, several of the



Greeks, to save their lives, had become Mahometans; among these was a rich merchant: this man we frequently met, and he invited us to visit him. He was a smooth, good-looking, and corpulent Greek, and confessed it was to save his head only that he had apostatized. It was now the fast of Ramadan, and he bitterly exclaimed against the Koran, and its absurd laws, which compelled him to fast from one sunset to the next, and this agreed dreadfully with his habit of body. "Sixty-three times to-day," said he, "have I been obliged to prostrate myself towards Mecca, and touch the ground with my forehead;"—which could have been no easy matter, from his extreme corpulence. He cursed the Prophet, and his paradise too. "I must put myself to torment," said the Greek, "for what I care nothing about: and what are all his bowers and pleasures to me, while I am famishing?" Besides, the faithful had their eyes sharply upon him, and he was obliged to model his subtile face into a solemn and reverential expression, and keep from other indulgences, which mortified

him more than the loss of the good cheer, for, from his own account, he was a thorough profligate.

Another Greek family were placed in a rather more tragical situation at Larnica. A certain time was allotted them to decide whether to embrace Islamism or die; the husband leaned to the former alternative, and strove to persuade all his family; but the wife was firmly resolved to adhere to the faith of her fathers, and, like many other Greek women in this warfare, showed a heroism, of which the men are too often destitute: the time allotted was not yet expired.

Cyprus, from its vicinity to the Egyptian power, the cutting off of nearly all the rich and distinguished Greeks, and the want of spirit in the remainder, was more unfortunately situated than the rest of the Greek islands; and yielded without resistance to the cruelties of its oppressors. The military force at this time dispersed over so large a space was weak; and had a body of resolute Greeks effected a landing

in any part, the island would probably have been free, at least for a time.

It was sad to see this large and beautiful island so desolate and ravaged; chateaus and their rich gardens laid waste and deserted, and their surviving possessors dependent on others for shelter and support; women, bred up in luxury, deprived of their husbands and parents; and the sons of nobles imploring refuge from strangers. Large domains of land could be bought for a trifle; and a chateau, with a garden, together with a small village on the domain, and an extensive tract of land, were offered for a few hundred pounds.

We left Larnica on a fine evening, on a tour into the interior of the island. The Consul caused his secretary and one of his servants to accompany us; so that, with the Janizary and his servant, we formed a party of nine. The Turk was a fellow of humour and good nature, and, unlike these guards in general, accommodated himself entirely to our movements.

In about two hours, after travelling over a

parched plain, we came to a fine fountain, with some trees, and stopped for a short time ; and towards evening arrived at a hamlet of Greek peasants, and took up our lodging in a neat cottage. The fare the good people provided, with some additions from Larnica, furnished an excellent supper. The horses being ready to start soon after daybreak, we took a simple yet luxurious breakfast in the court, and which, from its being so speedily provided, we often adopted afterwards : the new milk from the cow being placed over the fire, and a quantity of coffee thrown into it, made a repast in a few minutes, with a crust of bread, fit for an epicure.

The day was exceedingly beautiful ; every day indeed was alike ; and the atmosphere was so pure, that the outline of each mountain in the horizon, however distant, was traced with perfect distinctness. The way led over a plain, more verdant, however, than the one traversed the day before ; and in a few hours we came to a deserted chateau, that had belonged to a wealthy Greek gentleman. It afforded a melancholy and affecting scene. The chambers were

all empty, and the furniture destroyed or plundered. Through the small and rich garden ran a beautiful stream : we sat on its banks beneath the shade of the trees, and partook of some refreshment brought by a peasant, whom we found in the house, and who belonged probably to a village not far distant. The windows of the house looked over a spacious plain in front, and a range of fine mountains on the right. The owner had been murdered by the Turks ; and his widow and children, some of whom were very young, were driven out to misery and dependence.

Leaving this spot, we travelled over the plain beneath a sultry sun, and saw with joy the rich and deep groves of Cytherea at a distance, which soon afforded a welcome shade. We proceeded to the house of a Greek priest, and, ascending a long flight of steps, entered the garden, into which the dwelling opened. It was a sweet and retired place, full of orange and lemon trees ; the fruit of the latter hung in quantities, and of an enormous size. The father seemed well pleased with our visit, and killed,

not a fatted calf or kid, but a goat, which being made into soup, and two or three sorts of dishes, was served up in the corridor. This good man had a wife and family, and seemed to live in much comfort.

The village of Cytherea consists of detached cottages, each having its garden and rivulet; for so great is the abundance of streams around this spot, that they appear to flow close to every dwelling. The groves are chiefly of mulberry, orange, and lemon trees; and a quantity of silk is produced here. Next to the gardens, the chief attraction around this spot is the picturesque and irregular chain of mountains that rises above and around it, the waving and rocky outline of which is beautiful. Not far from the father's was the handsome dwelling of a Greek boyar, the coolness of whose garden and rushing stream almost invited us to become purchasers, and settle in this place, where the climate is healthy, and free from the scorching heats of the coast. The possessor of this mansion had been beheaded a short time before, and it was left desolate: the Turks would have sold

it for a trifle, and an Englishman might have enjoyed it in perfect safety.

In the evening we visited the greater part of the scattered village : one seldom sees a more inviting and attractive spot ; and we ascended, about sunset, one of the mountains to the west. The light was nearly faded when we had gained the top ; yet we had a fine view of the sea, the coast beneath, and the high shores of Caramania on the opposite side ; but it soon became indistinct, and we had to find our way back nearly in darkness. The descent over the rocks was very annoying, and we regained the priest's home with no little pleasure, and, being parched with heat, had the table placed in the garden beneath the orange and lemon trees, and plucking the fresh fruit, drank insatiably of excellent lemonade. To lie down to sleep beneath the deep foliage was a luxury ; and the perfume was wafted by the cool night-breeze around us.

We took leave of our host next morning, who, if subsequent accounts are correct, possessed not his sweet garden and cottage much

longer, but was soon after numbered with his murdered countrymen. Ascending the mountains, the path soon became wild and rocky; and in a few hours we beheld the monastery of Chrysostom on the declivity above, and wound up a steep ascent to it. It is overhung on three sides by lofty mountains, and looks down in front on an extensive plain, in the midst of which is the city of Nicosia. The convent is very ancient, and contains about a dozen Greek monks; whose larder did not appear to be very well provided, as we soon found to our cost. They had abundance of room and solitude, and could inhabit only a part of their edifice. The church is paved with marble, and the walls adorned with the usual daubings of Greek saints, male and female, who must be all of one family, from their marvellous likeness to each other.

Whatever might have been the former reputation of the convent, it is little resorted to now, and its finances are probably very low. It was founded by a rich Cypriot lady, some centuries ago; and beneath the portico of the church is



her tomb, over which a lamp was kept always burning. Two slaves, or domestics, to whom their mistress was strongly attached, are laid in the same tomb, according to her wish in her last moments. It is a wild and tranquil spot to be buried in, where the mountain-winds breathe fresh over her grave.

In the garden of the monastery are cypress-trees of immense size and beauty, exceeding all we ever beheld; and a fountain breaks away, and descends over the rocks into the plain beneath. These monks lead a cheerless life, being under a vow of poverty and chastity, besides other severe rules; for which they have, probably, to thank their lady-foundress. On the brink of a steep mountain, that rises to a great height over the convent, are the colossal ruins of a castle, <sup>the</sup> ~~whose~~ <sup>of which</sup> position must have been almost invulnerable. It was built as a place of defence against the oppressions of the Knights Templars, at the time they possessed the island. A long, steep, and most toilsome path leads up to it; but the prospect from the summit, as well as the remains themselves, amply repay the

trouble. A number of small and ruinous chambers, and massive walls, spread over the face of these craggy rocks, have a singular effect ; and the view extends over the greater part of the island, the immense plain that intersects it, and its mountain border, with the coast below, and the sea and shores of Asia beyond.

On returning to the convent, the good fathers, who never eat flesh themselves, soon after introduced different parts of a goat for our dinner ; but he must have been some venerable attendant on the convent, or else bound under the same laws of self-denial, for it was impossible to partake of a single morsel, and we bade the monk make us rid of it. However, he produced some excellent honey, for which Cyprus is famous, as well as for its wines.

In the evening we rode down the mountain and over the plain, entering the gates of Nicosia before sunset. Having sent a letter of introduction to the Greek archbishop of the island, he immediately provided an excellent house and garden for our residence, and after dark ho-

noured us with a visit. Cyprian, so cruelly murdered not long after our departure, was a fine and dignified looking man. He came to accompany us to supper at his palace ; for which we soon after set out, lighted by a number of torches. The archbishop walked at the head, and his priests followed in order, according to their dignity. His table was sumptuously spread, and the cookery exquisite ; the Cyprus wine of the oldest quality. Every morning he sent us breakfast in the English style, which was served by his domestics ; at mid-day we dined at the palace ; and every evening he came to converse for an hour, and then conducted us to his home, in procession, as before, to sup and spend the evening. His kindness and attentions were excessive, at the very time that he was labouring under constant alarm and agitation of mind.

What situation could be more affecting and distressing ? Chosen to his high office by the Porte, as well as by his people, he formerly possessed great temporal influence in the island, even beyond that of the governor, till the break-

ing out of the revolution caused it to be taken from him. For some time, he had been compelled to look on the massacres of his countrymen and the plunder of their property, and stifle every expression of feeling. The oppressed and menaced Greeks often sought him for refuge; but, watched vigilantly by the Turkish authorities, he dared not afford protection to any, save by his private charities, for which he had numberless objects. But now affairs were assuming a darker and more threatening aspect, as it regarded his own safety: he had been frequently insulted by the Turkish soldiers; the governor had spoken in abusive terms of him. "My death is not far distant," said Cyprian to us; "I know they only wait for an opportunity to despatch me!"—and this was very evident.

One evening as we sat at supper, he was called out by one of his attendants respecting a message from the governor. We accompanied him to another apartment, where the soldier waited, who spoke in the most insulting terms: the calmness of the archbishop forsook him, and

he replied with great warmth, refusing to obey the message. The soldier departed, and we returned to the table, but its harmony was completely destroyed. The ecclesiastics looked pale and terrified, and Cyprian sought by every effort to encourage them. He was deeply agitated and affected ; but his fine features were lighted up with a noble energy, as he dwelt on the cruelties of their oppressors, and protested his determination no longer to submit to such aggravated insults, at the same time that he warned his hearers to prepare for the worst.

No one interrupted him, for it seemed like the farewell address of this excellent pastor to his trembling people ; who felt, no doubt, that when the high and noble spirit that had guarded and consoled them, took its flight, they would fall a helpless prey into the hands of their enemies. The lamp-light, falling on the group of listening ecclesiastics, and on the remarkably fine countenance of their leader, whose long white beard descended nearly to his girdle, rendered this a scene not easily to be forgotten. It grew late, and we waited with anxiety the return of the

soldier, who would probably bring a fiercer message from that wretch the governor ; but, to the satisfaction of all, he returned no more.

Highly eminent for his learning and piety, as well as for his unshaken fortitude, Cyprian was the last rallying point of the wretched Greeks ; and his frequent remonstrances and reproaches had rendered him very obnoxious to the Turkish authorities. He often shed tears when he spoke to us of the slaughter of his countrymen. We asked him why, in the midst of such dangers, he did not seek his own safety, and leave the island ; but he declared he would remain to afford his people all the protection in his power to the last, and would perish with them.

The garden attached to the residence afforded a very pleasing walk amidst the burning heat of the day ; having plenty of shade, and fountains. The climate of Nicosia, from its situation in a wide and flat plain, is oppressively hot, and it was scarcely possible to walk in the streets in the middle of the day. The construction of the houses and streets being more Venetian than Turkish, the city does not enjoy the shade and

coolness of most other Oriental towns. It is surrounded by a very strong wall, in which are three handsome gates.

We went one day, by the governor's permission, to visit the large and splendid mosque of the city, and were attended by a fierce and brutal Sclavonian soldier, who had been the executioner of the unfortunate Greek nobles, in the great square, a short time before. This mosque was formerly the Christian church of St. Sophia; it was built by the Venetians in the Gothic style, and consists of three aisles, formed by lofty pillars of marble. Around are the tombs of princes, of knights templars, and Venetian nobles. Every vestige of the Christian worship was destroyed when the Turks stormed the city in the fifteenth century; but it has been impossible to give it the air of a mosque. The imaun's pulpit is erected where once, probably, stood the altar, and the walls are covered with inscriptions from the Koran, in large letters of gold: the pavement is of marble. At the time we visited it, the imaun was seated a few steps above the floor, on which sat a circle of Turkish

gentlemen, each with the Koran in his hand, to whom he was expounding with much earnestness, and they listened very attentively.

This noble edifice conveys an impressive idea of earthly vicissitudes. The ancient kings of Cyprus were crowned within its walls, where also their ashes were laid: the warriors of the Temple have their tombs here, and many a haughty Venetian senator; but now the Turk tramples on their ashes, and invokes the Prophet over the graves of those who shed their blood in defiance of his name.

It is difficult to form an idea of the population of the town at present,—so many of the Greeks have fled or been sacrificed, or keep concealed in their houses.

We went to the palace to have an audience of the governor: he was absent in the country, but his chief officer, a young and handsome man, received us with great politeness. Some of the apartments of the palace were very elegantly furnished, with a double row of windows on three sides of the walls, for the admission of air. Refreshments were served, and



the Turk assured us of perfect safety in travelling to any part of the island, and requested, that, if we wanted any thing, we would make it known to him. The palace stands in the great square, in the midst of which is a beautiful fountain: it was here that the cruel execution took place, of the Greek nobles and merchants. The governor sent to inform them, that he had just received despatches from Constantinople, which not only assured them of protection and safety, but granted them some additional privileges; and he invited them, from different parts, to attend at his palace on a certain day, to hear these documents read. Too credulously trusting to the governor's professions, almost all the principal Greeks in the island assembled, and were admitted into the chamber of audience, from which they were almost instantly conducted by a passage, one after the other, into the square without, where the sight of a strong guard, and the executioner with his naked sabre in his hand, revealed at once the base treachery practised on them. The latter, who was a Sclavonian soldier, boasted

to us of his dexterity in the execution, for he had struck off every one of their heads with a single blow of the sabre. The father of the family who found refuge at the consul's at Larnica, was among the number. The unhappy men bore their fate with singular resignation, and submitted their necks to the blow without a murmur or complaint. Their houses and effects, lands and villages, were instantly seized and confiscated, and their families rendered desolate ! It is not easy to estimate the misery occasioned by this sudden and cold-blooded cruelty.

The archbishop described this scene, which was quite recent ; and the anguish of his feelings was bitterly augmented on the following day, when the Slavonian soldier waited on him and demanded a reward. Cyprian asked for what ? The other answered, because he had put the archbishop's countrymen to death with so little pain, having beheaded each at a single blow, and that he deserved a recompense. But this wretch had been richly paid before ; as he affirmed, on our way to the mosque, that

he had received a certain sum of the governor for every head.

While at Nicosia, we passed some part of every day in visiting the Greek families, with the consul's secretary, and were always received with the most attentive politeness. They, in general, lived retired, and many of their residences were handsome, opening into a pleasant garden, and surrounded with a corridor; the interior was furnished in the Turkish style. The women of the family were always present, their long tresses unconfined, of a dark colour, as well as their eyes; their complexion was seldom fair. One of these ladies, the wife of a merchant who was ill, was a remarkably intelligent and clever woman: she sometimes sat with us in the corridor, and conversed with deep feeling on the distresses of her people. Her husband, to save his life, and his family from ruin, had assumed the turban, and then every para of his property became as secure as in a fortress.

Coffee, sherbets, and wines of the finest quality, were introduced on these occasions.

One species of the latter, forty years old, was exquisite.

The often boasted beauty of the women of Cyprus has long ceased to exist : they are now a plain race ; the Grecian cast of features in some measure survives, but the form of symmetry, slender and elegant, is looked for in vain. It is, perhaps, doubtful how far the women of ancient Greece were a generally handsome race ; the statues which survive might be the *beau ideal* of the sculptor, or rather an assemblage of the beauties of various women, than the possession of any single one. Whenever this exquisite beauty really existed, it became the theme of the poet, and the subject of the painter, who lavished all their powers in the description, which would hardly have been the case if beauty was the common or frequent gift. Immured as they were in the seclusions of their own walls, their lives and minds in general insipid and uncultivated, their society must have been, in some degree, regarded with a similar esteem and respect by the intellectual Greeks, as the Ottoman ladies are by the Turkish lords of the

present day. Another circumstance unfavourable to the growth or preservation of beauty in the Greeks, was, that they confined their connexions chiefly to their own country, and did not generally intermarry with other nations. It is evident, that the personal advantages the Turks possess over other nations, are exclusively owing to their taking wives from all countries; Arab, Grecian, and Persian blood all flow in the veins of an Ottoman, and conspire to make him the handsomest of human beings.

One afternoon a messenger came to invite us to an audience of the Governor, who was returned. He was sitting on a cushion, in a small and cool apartment, and was a most ferocious and savage-looking fellow. He had none of the gentlemanly and dignified manners which generally characterize Turks of rank. We were scarcely seated, before he broke out in furious terms against the Greeks, on whom he lavished the foulest epithets. He abused the excellent Cyprian; and bitterly menaced a Greek monastery on the sea-shore, a few leagues from the city: it would make an ex-

cellent post, he said, for his soldiers, and those dogs should not possess it long. This convent, in a noble situation, was inhabited by a few poor monks, and during our stay in the city some soldiers entered it, and grossly insulted and beat one or two of the fathers, and plundered whatever they could lay their hands on. Not long after our departure, it was attacked and taken possession of by the troops, and all the fathers were murdered. The behaviour of the governor during our interview with him was more like that of a wild beast than a man; he evidently looked forward with delight to the heaping fresh cruelties on the wretched Greeks.

On leaving him, we visited the General of the Egyptian troops, sent by Mahmoud Ali to secure the island. He was seated in a small and beautiful kiosque, in the middle of the garden; the roof, in the form of a cupola, was light and gilded, and the windows, which looked into the garden, were surrounded by a number of fine trees. This commander was an elderly man, with a dissolute, yet inanimate

countenance; he was attended by several of his officers: he conversed freely, and asked if England was not as hot as Cyprus; the air at this time was quite oppressive. The pipes brought by the attendants were very richly ornamented, and the napkins of purple silk, flowered with silver. The chibouques we smoked at the palace every day were splendidly enamelled, and valued at thirty guineas each; those of the general were little less valuable. We quitted this chief with pleasure, and returned to the archbishop's, who gratified us, after dinner, with an exhibition of sword-playing. Two men, armed with sword and target, and who were habited like mountaineers, and of a wild aspect, displayed considerable skill in attacking and warding off each other's blows for some time: the shield was of the size and form used by the Highlanders in former times.

The church of the Greek convent at Nicosia is adorned with costly ornaments, particularly a small image of the Virgin, almost covered with precious stones. Demetrie, who was a

bigoted Greek when he joined us, had lost so much of his intolerance by associating with Michel, that he warned those around him, to our no small amusement, not to put faith in idols, such as this splendid Virgin. An old Greek, who stood by, raised his hands and eyes in utter astonishment at such blasphemous discourse.

We took leave, at last, of the excellent Cyprian, whose fate, as it was easy to perceive, was near at hand. He gave us his blessing, and requested us to remember, and carry to our country, the details of his sad and melancholy situation. Indeed, he appeared weary of his life: many of his ecclesiastics having been executed almost before his eyes, others imprisoned, or plundered of all they possessed, and the remainder subjected, with himself, to constant insults and persecutions.

Leondias, son of the late Vicar, was seized, and suffered cruel tortures during several days, to compel him to reveal the place where the nephew of the Archbishop was concealed. This young man, Theseus by name, had bribed



the executioners sent to arrest him ; and, having paid large sums to some of his chief enemies, succeeded in saving himself by flight from Nicosia, into some of the remote parts of the island. Leondias, who was an old man, either not knowing or refusing to tell the place of his concealment, expired at last, after enduring extreme tortures. The prelate was filled with anguish at the unhappy event.

It was not long afterwards that the perfidious governor invited Cyprian to summon his chief ecclesiastics, saying that he wished to impart to them some intelligence which particularly concerned their safety and welfare, and requesting an immediate interview. All the clergy who were summoned to attend, were filled with suspicion of some treacherous design ; but all hope of escape, or of avoiding this assembly, was vain, as the island was filled with the troops of the pacha of Egypt. But these unfortunate ecclesiastics hoped, that by offering all that remained of their property, they might satisfy the rapacity, and appease the fury, of the governor.

The next day, the prelate and his devoted flock were assembled in the Turkish palace, in the great square of Nicosia; when the governor, having placed guards at the gates and in all the passages, ordered the massacre to begin. Cyprian, in this trying moment, behaved with uncommon courage and dignity: he demanded of the governor, what crime these ill-fated men were guilty of, that they should suffer so dreadful a fate; recounted the spoliations and insults they had already endured, declared their entire innocence, and that, if nothing but blood would satisfy the governor's cruelty, he was ready to shed his own rather than they should perish.

The Turk returned a short and brutal reply; and the bishop's self-devotion only accelerated his own destruction. Many insulting questions were put to him; but he declared he had always served the sultan with perfect integrity, who, he now found, had deserted him, and given him up to the malice of his enemies. He requested a few moments to spend in prayer. By this time, his beloved people lay

murdered around him, and he knelt down amidst their dead bodies, and commended his spirit into the hands of God. His head was then struck off, and he died without a murmur, evincing the same serenity and exalted piety, which through life had endeared him to all his people.

Filled with horror at the death of their revered prelate, many of the wretched Greeks of both sexes took refuge in the churches; but these retreats were soon violated by the infuriated Turks, and the pavement streamed with blood. The altar itself did not protect those who clung to it from violation; and the dreadful scenes of Scio, although to a smaller extent, were acted over again on those fatal days at Nicosia !

## LETTER XXIII.

## CYPRUS.—RHODES.

LEAVING Nicosia in the morning of a beautiful day, we travelled through a country that had little interesting in its appearance, till, in the afternoon, we came to the small plain and village of Dale, the ancient Idalium, and gladly sought shelter from the heat in one of the cottages. Michel brought a small sheep for our evening's repast, which did not prove too much to satisfy so large a company, increased by two or three of the inhabitants. In the mean time, the good cottagers set before us some delicious honey, and a preparation of cream.

As soon as the heat was in some measure abated, we sallied out to explore the neighbourhood, which is very beautiful, shaded by

a variety of small groves, and abounding in fragrant shrubs. A fine stream, on the banks of which the village is built, runs through the plain. The soil is excessively rich, though only partially cultivated. A large and confused heap of ruins, the remains of the ancient city, are on the plain, at about a mile from the village; but not a column or fragment possessing any beauty, is left to tell of its former magnificence. A lofty eminence, on the right, is covered with remains of a similar kind, but more massive in their appearance: a circular wall, in spite of its decayed state, may be distinctly traced. The view over the plain from the summit of this hill is uncommonly fine; a more delightful and superb site for a city can scarcely be imagined. We watched the sun going slowly down on its groves and stream with great delight, and then bent our way to our rude habitation.

Near the foot of this hill, in a most lonely spot, and in a wretched cottage, lived a family of lepers. These unfortunate people were avoided by all the other inhabitants, who dreaded to

come near their dwelling. The disease was hereditary ; for every one of this numerous family was afflicted with it. Some of them stood at the door, and looked the pictures of sadness and solitude. They would be starved, did not some of the people who lived in the plain bring food occasionally, and place it at a short distance from the cottage. So great is the horror entertained of this disease, that the Mosaic law is fulfilled to the letter, of thrusting them out from all society, without the hope of ever returning to it.

Returning to our cottage, by the river side; we found the sheep ready to be served up, cooked in half a dozen different ways, and accompanied by some very good Cyprus wine. The table was spread in the court, and the air was now delightfully cool. The twilight at this season of the year (June) was longer than it is often thought to be in eastern climates, affording us excellent light for nearly three quarters of an hour. Some of our party danced in high glee to a guitar, played by one of the natives,

till the lateness of the hour induced us to retire to our rude couch.

Early the next morning, after a hasty breakfast, we took our departure from the pleasant environs of Idalium, and bent our way towards Larnica. Some parts of the country were romantic, particularly a long and winding defile, on each side of which the rocks rose precipitately; and a monastery perched on the top of a small and conical hill, that was perfectly bare, was on the right. In the afternoon, we came to Larnica, and the hospitable home of the Consul.

It was now time to think of proceeding to Greece, as Cyprus became every day more and more a prey to tumults and massacres. But we waited some days in vain for a passage to the Morea: it was a dangerous destination, and no vessel was likely to undertake it.

The new superior of the Catholic convent at Jerusalem arrived here on his way: he was a good-natured, cheerful monk, and preached on the Sunday an eloquent sermon, in Italian, in

the convent chapel. He seemed to like his destination uncommonly well. So fond are these ecclesiastics of power, that many of them would go again to the rocks and caves of the Thebais, to have dominion over their brethren.

Our resources for amusement at Larnica were very few; the occasional visits to the families extended only to sitting for an hour on the divan, or beneath the trees in the garden, and the refreshment of a cup of coffee, or a glass of Cyprus wine. The Consul, though a Greek, and perfectly secure beneath the protection of the English Government, would most gladly have left the island with his children, to place them out of danger during the present unhappy state of affairs. His eldest daughter, a fine young woman, was married to a merchant of good property in the town, with whom she appeared to live very happily: we passed a very pleasant evening at their house. The Consul had a covered caleche, of curious appearance, in which we sometimes drove during the sultry hours of the day, and passed some hours in a



sort of coffee-house, chiefly to enjoy the cool breezes from the sea, beside which it stood.

Demetrie, Mr. G.'s servant, drove his bargains here to vast advantage; he was a merchant whenever opportunity offered; and he never omitted to embrace it. When at Jerusalem, he carried to the Holy Sepulchre a large heap of necklaces of beads, and crosses, and laid them on the sacred marble, that they might be rendered precious, and have the incense sprinkled on them. These he was sure to sell among his countrymen at home at a very high price. Milk of the Virgin, relics of all kinds, were treasured up with the same irreverent purpose. But he was rigid in all his observances, and contended stoutly for the excellence of the Greek faith, though he confessed himself to be a desperate sinner, and even doubted sometimes if the saints would be able to do any thing for him. He contrived, while at Larnica, to buy a large quantity of wine at a very low price, of a young Greek, whose father had been beheaded some time before. The merchant declined parting

with his wine so cheaply; but Demetrie completely frightened him into it, by declaring he was servant to some Lords Inglese, who would not be trifled with in this manner, and who had power to have his head taken off, as his father's had been, and with as little ceremony.

An Ionian vessel, bound to Trieste, afforded me an excellent opportunity of visiting the Morea, as the captain engaged, for a handsome *douceur*, to deviate from his course, and put me on shore at Navarino. Mr. G. resolved to visit Constantinople; and a large Austrian ship, that lay in the harbour of Famagousta, being about to sail for that city in a few days, he engaged a passage; but the Ionian brig was ready to depart first, and we parted with deep regret, having passed through various and trying scenes with the greatest delight, and with a harmony that scarcely ever experienced a moment's interruption.

It was a lovely evening when I went on board, and we sailed the same night in the confident expectation of a passage of only four or five days. But never were hopes more miser-

ably disappointed. We had on board a strange assemblage of passengers, and an odd cargo. There were eight fine Arabian horses, sent as a present by a rich Jew-merchant of Aleppo, to the Emperor of Austria, and two or three servants to take care of them. Owing partly to the extreme heat of the weather, these animals collected clouds of large flies about them, which also found their way into every part of the ship. Two Franciscan priests, who had been sent to Jerusalem from Italy with a supply of money to the Catholic convent, were on their way back to Rome. They were good-natured men, very bigoted ; and having never been on a journey before, they were heartily tired, and longed to be back in their convent. They provided for the flesh, however, even amidst more important concerns, having brought a large stock of fowls and some excellent wine. A rich Albanian gentleman, with three or four attendants, gave a variety to the scene : he was a handsome man ; and had long resided in the Turkish dominions, but had now resolved to go to Trieste; and put his property in greater safety. He and his ser-

vants wore the Albanian dress, with a poniard and pistols in their sash ; they were wild and joyous fellows. There were, also, an unfortunate Servian and his wife, who had travelled an immense distance from their country on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. I had seen this man in the latter city, where he requested to join our party to the Dead Sea, when we expected a guard from the governor to go by the regular route. So great was the Servian's enthusiasm when he saw the Holy Sepulchre, that he gave forty pounds to the priests, which he could very badly spare. Several Greeks had obtained a passage, on finding the vessel was to touch at Navarino. These men were going to fight for their country ; one or two of them were fine young men : they all wore a long poniard concealed beneath the right arm, the point being level with the elbow joint, and the handle with the wrist. One of them had a guitar, which, though he played but rudely, proved a great resource to us afterwards.

But the greatest curiosity of all was Demetrio, a Slavonian, coming from pilgrimage also.

He had been servant to the Armenian merchant, who died in Jerusalem. The convent took possession of his effects, and refused to pay the domestic his wages, but recommended him to another of the pilgrims, who procured him a passage in this vessel. Demetrio was a very little man, with a nose and chin as sharp as a hatchet, and his head covered by an old hat that had lost all its brim. He had a singularly solemn expression of countenance, had the reputation of being very devout, and would seat himself for hours in the stern, with his face turned towards Heaven, or cast on the waters with a mortified look, as if he despised all earthly concerns. He was sometimes very officious in serving me. It was Lent time; and, though the poor fellow was occasionally half starved, so strict was he, that he would never drink any of my tea and coffee, because an egg was used with them in lieu of milk. He would take the basin offered him, filled with this beverage, in his hand, and gaze at it with a longing eye, but it was utterly lost to him: never did it approach his lips—it was Lent time, and Demetrio

would have suffered any extremity rather than touch any thing defiled with an egg. "Thank God!" he was often heard to exclaim, "that I have seen the Holy City!"

We went on very well for two days; and the night was so fine and tempting, that I had my mattress laid on the deck, but was awoke soon after morning-light by a high wind, and a violent pitching of the vessel; and from that time misfortune never left us. Baffling winds were succeeded by calms, that lasted several days, when the ship lay motionless on the water, and not a breath of air was to be felt. The heat during these calms was very oppressive, and obliged us to seek shelter beneath awnings on deck. The captain was evidently ignorant of the navigation of this part of the Mediterranean, as we were at one time in view of the coast of Caramania, and again caught a glimpse of some distant isle. A hard gale came on afterwards, that obliged us to drive under bare poles, and lasted a day and night. Towards evening, we passed near a rocky isle, precipitous on every side, and uninhabited, over which the sea broke furiously.

Week after week passed in this way, and we found ourselves drawing little nearer to our destination. The worst misfortune was, that a great many of the passengers had laid in a stock of provisions for a few days only, and it speedily began to fall short. The fowls of the two fathers were lodged in the large boat on the deck, and one or two would sometimes disappear in the course of the night. One of the monks, every morning, the moment he turned out of his birth below, ran on deck to count over the fowls; and when he found one or two missing, he made a loud and sad lamentation, declaring they should soon have nothing to eat, and accusing one or another of the crew, who all declared their innocence. Every morning and evening they recited their prayers in a loud voice on deck, and often disputed on religious points; but, when the storm commenced, they were excessively frightened; kept themselves in the cabin, and called on the saints in a piteous manner, declaring that the Devil had brought them into their present condition. At each roll of the vessel in the plough of the waves, "O

santa Virgine!" cried Father Pietro—"O santissima! we shall lose ourselves." One saint followed another;—while Father Giuseppe, on whom a large trunk had been overturned, groaned heavily, and we missed him for two or three days, during which he had secreted himself in the hold, where he kept praying without ceasing, divided between his faith and his fears, but still rejoicing, that, though a great sinner, he had seen Jerusalem.

A dead calm, of many days continuance, followed this storm; during which the evenings were delightful, and the sunsets full of beauty. The hours then passed more gaily away: the Albanian and his servants, forming into a circle, danced their war-dance to the guitar; the Greeks followed in the dance of their own country; one or two sung, and others formed parties for conversation. The Servian was the most unhappy of all: during the bad weather he sat on the deck, weeping like a child, and exclaiming he never should see Servia again. He would receive no consolation; even his visit to the Sepulchre had lost all its charms; his wife he scolded and up-



braided, when she attempted to comfort him ; and then she sat by his side for hours, without uttering a word, the very picture of misery. Indeed, adversity, instead of riveting the chains of affection, seemed to sever these unfortunate pilgrims from each other. Many of the poorer passengers would have been nearly starved, their provisions being exhausted, as the voyage had now lasted nearly three weeks, had not some who were better provided assisted them.

The Albanian was very generous on this occasion, and also offered a poor, yet haughty Greek, who appeared to have seen better times, a present of fifteen piastres, who refused to accept of less than fifty. This man had retired every day to a secluded place on the deck with his pittance of bread and cheese, his only meal during the day ; and when that was consumed, he never uttered a murmur, or the slightest request to any one who could have befriended him. The pride of this man was intense ; but it was mournfully humbled afterwards. One day, during my residence at Tripolizza, walking through the streets, a pale and wan-looking

man accosted me, and smiled as he spoke of the wretched voyage we had passed in the same ship; and in his emaciated features I discovered, with difficulty, the Greek, whose demeanour on board I had often admired. He had fancied his miseries would be at an end when he came among his countrymen, but his pride plunged him in a worse condition than ever. Too haughty to work, and too delicate to take his musket and join the ranks, his countrymen, who had been kind to him at first, had at last totally neglected him. Hunger and wretchedness were both preying on him then, and he was in his own land without a friend.

At last, to our infinite joy, we drew near the island of Rhodes. We had seen it at a distance two or three times before, but it only tantalized us: one evening, in particular, when the sea was perfectly calm, the last beams of day had lingered on its high hills with a splendour that made us long to be there. We now gazed on its palm and orange groves, its green slopes and summer-houses, with exquisite pleasure: our past privations were forgotten in a moment.

The Captain was in much fear lest the Turks should visit his ship; as they would have probably seized and carried off the Greeks, who were going to join their countrymen in the Morea, and fight for their liberty: he, therefore, kept them close, and would not allow one to set his foot on shore.

I shall never forget the transition from that crowded wretched ship, filled with flies and a stifling heat, where sickness and disappointment had been our constant companions, to the rich shores of Rhodes, the loveliest isle in the Mediterranean. We walked with rapture in the shade of the gardens, devoured the oranges without moderation, and entering a coffee-house, seated ourselves beside a tall fountain, that fell with an incessant murmur.

After some time, we went to the Catholic convent, a building in the middle of a garden, and inhabited only by one elderly father, a Spaniard. The two Franciscan priests from Jerusalem accompanied me: they were anticipating a most affectionate reception from their brother in the faith, who was of the same or-

der. The old monk, knowing that he never lost any thing by entertaining Englishmen, received me with much profession of hospitality, but looked very indifferently upon the two pilgrim fathers. We found out afterwards, he was a *bon vivant*, and a voluptuary, but he had a very stern and keen cast of countenance. He ordered a fowl and fried eggs for my dinner; and, to prevent the two priests from partaking of any part of it, he set some raw salted fish, with some bread and vinegar, before them, to console their stomachs after so long a voyage. Indeed, he evidently wished them on board, or at the bottom, rather than within his walls, as it was only for the love of the Virgin or St. Peter, and that would not enable him to touch any cash. The fowl at last made its appearance, with the eggs covered with a quantity of soft sugar; and with the assistance of some of the red wine of Rhodes, and some excellent fruit, furnished a good repast.

We afterwards walked round the fortifications of the city, built by the Knights of St. John, and defended by them with such obsti-

nate valour against the Turks, in the sixteenth century. The walls are of immense strength, and flanked by a number of towers, some of which are in a ruinous condition ; but the Turks trust entirely to the defences themselves, which are not manned, or mounted with any cannon. The remains of the palace of the Grand Master possess some magnificence, and prove how luxuriously and splendidly the knights lived in this seat of their empire. The church of St. John is now a spacious mosque, and has a rather naked appearance. The gates and portals of the walls of the city are of great thickness and strength, and the faithful may, without any great difficulty, imagine the place invulnerable to any foe likely at present to come against them. Some pillars and ancient marbles, which have, however, little beauty, yet remain in the government house, or, more properly, the ruins of it.

The appearance of the town is more regular and clean than that of most Oriental cities. The width of the streets and the foot pavement by the sides, prove that they still retain the

form given them by their ancient possessors ; and a great many of the houses preserve their European aspect. The Jews have their particular quarter of the town, which is a narrow street ; and the quarter of the Greeks is much larger and cleaner. In one of the streets there is a row of trees on each side, which have a very pleasing appearance. Some of the coffee-houses are handsome. It was the first day of the feast of Beiram, and they were crowded with well-dressed Turks, who were extremely civil. They obliged us, however, to wait above an hour outside the gate, which they would not open till the afternoon prayers in the mosque were over. The small harbour or basin of Rhodes is very fine and convenient ; the rocks approach so near on each side, that scarcely more than one ship can enter at a time : the water within is only deep enough for merchant vessels. The houses stand close to the water's edge, round part of this harbour ; and the quays, on which grow some fine trees, afford an agreeable, but short promenade. Tradition says, the Colossus stood at the entrance of

this basin, with its feet on the rocks on each side.—But one of the chief charms of Rhodes, is its superb climate. The air is pure and healthy, and few diseases are known; the heat of the weather is seldom oppressive, being cooled by the westerly winds, which blow during the greater part of the year. It is an old saying, that the sun shines at Rhodes every day in the year; and there is scarcely ever known a day so cloudy or cheerless, that the sun does not clear the heavens, and bless the isle with his rays for some hours at least. The high mountains on the coast of Caramania, only a few leagues distant, add to the scenery. The town rises gradually from the shore, in a kind of amphitheatre; and the walk on its massive walls is very commanding.

The *Chargés-d'affaires* for France and Austria reside there, where they can have little or no society, save a few of the more intelligent Greeks, as there are no European merchants in the town. The Frenchman was a very amiable and lively young man, of genteel family, and only nineteen years of age; yet he appeared to

like his situation very well. At the Austrian's, we met with the captain of an English merchant-ship: he was an instance of the many unjust interpositions of his countrymen in aid of the Turks, of which the Greeks have complained so much. He had carried two cargoes of corn to the relief of the garrison of Patras, and was now engaged to carry a body of Turkish troops to fight against the Greeks in the Isle of Candia. The case was rather pressing; the governor had no Turkish vessels in which to embark them, and he had paid the Englishman a high price for the business. The latter held a large purse of money in his hand, which he shook with high glee, saying it was the sum he had just received for taking the Turkish soldiers to Candia. He set sail that evening; and walking near the harbour, we met these fellows hastening down to the shore, in order to embark: they were near three hundred.

In the evening we returned to the convent, and its solitary tenant, who seemed to be like a Grand Seignor in the place, and to have only



his own sovereign will to consult. We took a turn with him through part of the town, where he was greeted by many of his small flock with smiles and recognitions ; with the women he appeared to stand particularly well. But at supper the old gentleman quite forgot himself: he abused, in a strain of the utmost bitterness, the upholders of the Spanish Revolution, as children of the devil, and lost everlastingly. By their means, he said, all true religion was vanishing from the earth; and he had been peculiarly shocked lately by the irreverent behaviour of two Spaniards, who had landed and come to his chapel while he was performing mass, and which he imputed entirely to the progress of the new sentiments. The good father poured forth his anathemas with such ardour, and drank his Rhodian wine with such good will, that he soon became quite tipsy, to the great scandal of his two brethren, the pilgrims. They were directed by him to sleep that night in a passage, where one got a sofa, and the other lay down on the floor, while the Englishman was indulged with a de-

cent apartment and comfortable bed. The next day, the weather was beautiful, and the sun shone from a cloudless sky ; yet, although it was the month of June, the heat was so tempered by the sea-breezes, that it was not oppressive.

The country-houses of the Turks are mostly without the walls of the town, situated on declivities which shelve down to the water's edge. They are surrounded by gardens of various kinds of fruit-trees, among which there are always fountains, gushing with a luxurious and lulling sound. The houses, from their elevated site, command a delightful view of the bay, and are the favourite and constant retreats of the richer Turks. They extend for two or three miles along the sides of the hills, which rise gently from the water.

Much of the scenery in the interior of the island is of the most romantic kind. Wild and lonely valleys, where the rose and myrtle spring in profusion, open into the sea, and are inclosed by steep mountains on every side. The greater part of the island is uncultivated ; and the

number of the villages in the interior is small : pomegranate and fig-trees abound here, as well as peach-trees, but the fruit they produce is very inferior in flavour to those of Europe. The island is supposed to contain thirty thousand inhabitants, two thirds of whom are Turks, and is near forty leagues in circumference ; but so small a portion of the soil is cultivated, that it scarcely raises corn sufficient for its own support : wine is the only other produce of the soil of any consequence, and of this very little is exported.

But Rhodes is one of the cheapest places in the world to live in. One may not be able to procure here a variety of meats ; yet, such as there is, sheep, kid, fish, and poultry of various kinds, with excellent wines and fruits, cost a mere trifle. For a few hundreds a-year a stranger might live *en prince*, in this delicious island, have his chateau amidst gardens in a retired and beautiful situation, his Arab horses, a number of servants, a climate that will probably add ten years to his life, if he will consent to live without the enervating pleasures of high

society. It is well known that an English gentleman of handsome fortune made Scio his abode for many years: he had his family with him, lived in a charming spot, and kept a yacht, in which he often visited the other Greek islands, but always returned to his own abode with undiminished pleasure, and resolved never to forsake it. He died about four years ago, before the breaking out of the Revolution.

## LETTER XXIV.

## GREECE.

IN the middle of the isle of Rhodes, is a very lofty mountain: from its steepness, it can only be ascended on foot, and this occupies several hours. A small Greek chapel stands near the summit, to which the people often make pilgrimages. From the top of this mountain the prospect is very fine and extensive, including the whole of Rhodes, which lies like a map at your feet, the coast of Caramania, and a number of the isles of the Archipelago. The summit and parts of the sides of this noble mountain are covered with trees; but the hills and valleys are, in general, bare of wood; the pine forests, which formerly shaded many parts

of the island, have been in part cut down by the Turks, for various purposes.

One morning, I rose very early, before the old priest was stirring; and passing through the streets, took my way towards a lofty hill to the north of the town. The weather was splendid, and the coolness of the air delightful; the sky, the earth, and sea, being all covered with the richest hues of morning. A deep silence reigned throughout; no noise of carriage or horse, no song of the milk-maid, or hum of men. Nature, in Oriental scenes, is generally undisturbed, and a poet of the lakes might here revel in the most lonely and hushed communion with woods, waters, and precipices. The path along the summit of the hill was narrow, overgrown with foliage, and sprinkled with various-coloured wild-flowers; and the scenery below was rocky and bold down to the water's edge; but the path conducted from the summit down the opposite side of the hill fronting the bay, and wound amidst various country-seats, each placed amidst gardens, in the shade of which fountains played. Some of these abodes

were irresistibly tempting: they rose on the declivities above each other, amidst rocks and groves of fruit-trees, and from their elevated site, looked down on the most lovely scenery. The grapes hung in clusters from the trees, and the oranges were fully ripe. The air had become rather sultry as the day advanced, and I came with no small pleasure to a fine fountain of water, built by the Turks for the use of passengers: it was a neat stone structure, and a bason was suspended by a chain, to drink out of. The way, at last, led out of the woods and gardens to the sea-shore, and, after some time, entered the town at the western gate.

The island was at this time in a state of tranquillity; the horrors of the Revolution had not extended to it, and the Turks were too strong and numerous for the Greeks to make any attempt for their freedom. Our stay here was of the utmost service to us; it quite broke the miseries of the voyage, and enabled us at last, though unwillingly, to commit ourselves to our bark and its ignorant captain. The privations which many of the passengers had suffer-

ed, were, however, at an end ; some fresh provisions, and a whole sheep, had been sent on board for their use.

We again set sail on a very fine day, and with the wind somewhat in our favour ; but this soon died away, and on the following evening we were embayed among the rocks and small isles at the back of the island. The sea was quite calm and unruffled; the sun had set with its accustomed beauty, and not a breath of air filled our sails. We rested immoveable in a small lake, around which was an amphitheatre of hills and rocks, precipitous, or covered with verdure, and of various forms. At the foot of one lofty and shelving cliff stood a small fishing-village, at the edge of the water ; it contained only a few habitations, but looked so neat, lonely, and tranquil, that we could not help contrasting it with the ruined dwellings and persecuted outcasts we had so frequently met with. A faint breeze at last sprang up, and slowly wafted us through this chain of precipices and islets.

For ten days more was this unfortunate



voyage prolonged ; till, at length, we arrived in sight of the Morea, and soon after came within a few miles of Navarino. The Albanian, in his handsomest dress, and gold embossed pistols at his sash, accompanied us on shore.

We were received by the Greeks, on landing, with great civility, and were conducted to the house of the governor, who was a German. From him we obtained a passport, as we were about to proceed into the interior. Michel then sought out a comfortable lodging, and procured one not far from the sea, with a small garden in front, and an open corridor above, that commanded a very extensive view of the beautiful harbour, the castle of Sphacteria, and the mountains on the right.

This abode was not wholly our own ; three unfortunate Frenchmen and a German had previously occupied part of it. One of the former, Prospère, was a handsome young man ; had been an officer in Buonaparte's army, and served in some of the last campaigns ; but afterwards having nothing to do and not much to live on, and incited by the desire of fighting for the

cause of Greece, he had left Paris, much against the will of his mother, whose only child he was, and embarked with his companions at Marseilles. He knew nothing previously of the real state of things in Greece; had formed romantic ideas of the glory to be gained there, and doubted not of being well maintained, and of having his services appreciated; but he had not been many days in the country ere he found himself fatally deceived. He was a good artillery-officer, and the senate, then residing at Argos, gave him the command of the fortifications of Navarino, which was surrounded by a wall, and mounted with about a dozen pieces of cannon.

His three companions, who had been non-commissioned officers in the French army, and about a hundred Greeks, were all the force for the defence of the place; but, from its situation, it was very little exposed to attack. One night, however, a part of the Turkish garrison of Modon, a very pretty and well-fortified town at a little distance, thought to surprise Navarino, knowing it to be but weakly defended: they landed in the dead of night, and Prospère and

his companions were roused by the accidental report of a musket. The Turks, assembled on the beach just below the town, were on the point of marching up, when the Frenchmen with difficulty prevailed on five or six of the Greeks to assist them in firing two or three cannon; for most of the others, who assembled confusedly when they found the Turks had landed, and were close at hand, ran away in affright. Two or three cannon were fired, and, though the balls, from the darkness and confusion, never probably went near the enemy, they had the desired effect of frightening the Turks; who, contrary to their expectation, believing the garrison to be on the alert, embarked with precipitation, and returned to Modon.

The Senate allowed these unfortunate Frenchmen rations of wine, meat, and bread, every day, and a house to live in, but their bounty extended no farther. Their clothes were in a sad plight; in shoes and stockings they were nearly bankrupts, and could not obtain a farthing of pay to relieve their necessities. Prospère, shortly before my arrival, went to Argos,

to endeavour to obtain better terms from the Senate : he was received with great civility ; they acknowledged that he had preserved Navarino to them ; “ but we cannot afford you any pay, Monsieur,” they said ; “ our own officers serve without any ; we have no money ; let us wait for better times ; go back and defend Navarino, and when we have reconquered our country, your services shall be well rewarded.” Hope was indeed the only consolation these adventurers had ; they had not even the solace, so dear to a soldier, of good wine. Throughout the Morea the wine at this time was execrable, in consequence of the confusion and the neglect of the vintage, which the war had occasioned. The only sort in general to be met with was of the colour of gin ; and a plant that had been steeped in it, of whose flavour the Greeks are fond, had given it so horrible a flavour, that the fear of being poisoned deterred us, after the first trial, from ever touching it again.

Michael bought a sheep, and, having dressed some part of it, we made a pleasant repast together, and finished the remains of the Cyprus

wine left from our voyage, and which put the exiled officer into excellent spirits. The remainder of the mutton served them subsequently with some good dinners, for they were not seldom badly supplied with meat ; and a loan of a few dollars enabled poor Prospère to re-furnish himself with shoes and stockings.

Navarino had been besieged nine months by the Greeks, and, during the whole of this time, no succours had been sent by the Porte. It is surrounded by a pretty strong wall, and stands on a gentle declivity, sloping into the sea. It was never very strenuously pressed, yet the Turks defended it with spirit, till their provisions were entirely consumed. They had hoped for relief to the last, and for several days had been compelled to drink sea-water. A deep pit is now to be seen near the foot of the wall, within which this unfortunate garrison had hoped to find some fresh water : they had dug at last into the solid rock, before they gave up the attempt. Reduced to utter extremity, they still made a kind of capitulation, which was very indifferently observed by the Greeks. A great many

were put to the sword on the spot : the governor, who had retreated to his house, shared the same fate, with all his family ; and the mansion, which was a very spacious one, was completely sacked, and at the time we visited it, was ruinous and empty. This chief begged hard for his life, but it would not avail. The next evening, the Greeks led several hundreds of the women and children to the sea-shore, below the town, and put them all to the sword, so that the waves were dyed with their blood. This account we had from the Greeks themselves ; and Prospère, who landed soon after, said, this was a most piteous and cruel scene—mothers embracing their children, and young women imploring mercy—but all were speedily put out of their misery. Still more merciless than this was the conveying five hundred of the Turks to a small island, about two miles from the shore, quite desolate and uninhabited, and from which it was impossible to escape : they were all starved to death on this isle, and their bones are still to be seen there. Happily for the cause of Greece, atrocities like these have been long

since laid aside ; and, in the commencement of the struggle for liberty, much allowance is to be made for men, on whose minds the remembrance of the oppressions they had endured so long was still recent.

Several of the Mainotes were to be seen in the streets. It was the first time we had met with these lawless but brave people. They were dressed in the rude fashion of their country, which had some resemblance to the Highland costume ; and they looked prepared for any mischief.

The neighbourhood of Navarino, or Neo Castro, as it is now called, is very romantic and pleasing ; hills, isolated and sharp, rise just behind the town. The harbour of Navarino is one of the most secure in the world ; the entrance is not wide, and you may sail a long way between the shore and the small isles and rocks which confine the port. Several of these rocks are arched, and have a singular appearance, the waves having a wide and open passage through.

The Isle of Sphacteria is about three miles from the town ; it is small and rocky, and the

spots so obstinately defended by the Spartans, and the tombs of those who were slain there, are still pointed out. The ignorance of the Greeks in general, however, respecting these parts of their country, which were illustrious of old, is very great. On asking some respectable Greeks of Tripolizza what the plain of Mantineæ, about three hours distant, was famous for, they appeared to have no knowledge of the subject; one, however, observed that a great battle had been fought there. An Italian had settled here, and kept a liqueur-shop, in which he did not seem to have much custom. It was not entirely, however, destitute of every kind of luxury; there was a coffee-house, in which Greeks, Mainotes, Italians, and French mixed together, and behind was a very pretty garden, well provided with trees; benches and tables were laid beneath, where these people assembled together during the heat of the day, and talked over the war and their exploits. The women of the town were rather ill-looking; the close dress they are accustomed to wear injures the appearance of their figure.



A considerable part of the town had been injured at the time of its capture by the Greeks; houses were to be seen shattered, or in ruins, on every side; the best dwellings had all more or less suffered, and the one which we obtained for a residence was in some parts in a very infirm state:

The Frenchmen expected shortly to leave the town, having received orders to march to Tripolizza, and join the troops assembling there. Prospère possessed a tattered volume of Racine, in which was the play of Britannicus, and he set a peculiar value on it. I borrowed it of him, and hinted that I should be very happy if he would part with or exchange it; his reply showed a trait of feeling truly French, and in unison with that displayed by many of his countrymen who fell at Waterloo, and on whose bodies a volume of poetry, songs, or even of mathematics were often found: "I would part with it to you, my dear friend," he said, "with delight; but it is my only consolation. Whenever I read Britannicus, which is very often, the love of glory, and the admiration of patience

amidst sufferings, live again in my heart ; though I can assure you this cursed war had nearly crushed all my military virtues. If I part with Racine, I shall have no comfort left !”

We now resolved to leave Navarino, and proceed into the interior. Having procured horses and a guide, on the following forenoon we passed out of the gate, and bent our way along the cliffs ; having the attractive prospect of the bay on our left. The way soon became woody, and varied with high and pointed hills on the right. The weather was not oppressively hot ; and delicious springs, which, gushing in rivulets, or dug into the earth, abound in Greece for want of rivers, frequently crossed our path, and tempted us to stop and quench our thirst.

In the course of a few hours we came to a small cluster of cottages, and rested awhile beneath the shade of the trees, while the villagers brought us some milk, which proved a most grateful refreshment.

After advancing again some time, we entered a long and thick wood, and soon perceived, at a short distance in front, a large body of people

pursuing the same path. They went on very slowly, and on joining them, we found they were a party of unfortunate Sciots, who had with difficulty escaped from the island after the massacre; and were now seeking a place of refuge and a home in Greece. It was a scene that would have touched the hardest heart; the women were some of them dreadfully ill, reduced by famine and suffering, yet carrying their infants in their arms; the men were all on foot; the few surviving branches of families, strangers, orphans, and widows, were all blended together in one common bond of misery.—We gave up our horses for the relief of some of the young and delicate girls of the party.

Passing out of the wood, we proceeded down a long and gentle declivity into a fine plain. The scene was magnificent: mountains rose around covered with groves nearly to their summits, and the sea opened a few miles in our front, in the bay of Calamata: but these children of sorrow were alive only to their own destitute condition; with their eyes fixed on the ground, they gave vent only to bitter com-

plainings. At the foot of the hill we halted, beneath the shade of a large spreading tree; with difficulty the women, who were ill, were lifted off the horses, and seated on the grass.

Most of them had been of a very respectable condition in society, but, flying from Scio amidst the massacre of their relatives and friends, had left all behind them. One, a fine young woman, was supported against a tree, her countenance was pallid, and her eyes sunken, and her fortitude had wholly forsaken her; she seemed resolved to receive no consolation. A tedious voyage, want of food, the fatigue of travelling, her lover murdered,—all might well conspire to overwhelm her. Being better provided with refreshments, we were happy to administer some relief to them: a fountain gushed out in the shade of a rock near by; and, having rested some time, we again proceeded. The path wound amidst rocks and narrow valleys, affording a variety of pleasant scenes. Our course was very slow on account of our unfortunate companions: they were going to Calamata, where some of them had friends:—but what a

change from the lovely and luxurious Scio, its handsome dwellings, embosomed in gardens, and elegantly furnished,—to the outcast dependant life, which must, in future, be their only lot !

A lofty yet barren mountain excited our admiration ; on a projecting point of which, about half way down, was seated a spacious monastery. The situation was magnificent. Our path was often encumbered with the luxuriance of the foliage : that tall and beautiful flower, the daphné, grew wild in profusion. Nothing indeed could exceed the richness of the soil every where ; yet very little cultivation was visible. What a glorious country would Greece make, were she in the hands of an industrious, enlightened people !

It was after sunset when we entered a large village, where we intended to stay for the night. Our companions went to some of the dwellings, trusting either to the hospitality of the people, or to former acquaintance : we never heard any more of them : as Calamata was only a few hours distance, they no doubt arrived there on the following day.

We proceeded to inquire for the magistrate of the village, and found his worship in a narrow street, seated at the door of a coffee-house, surrounded by several neighbours, and enjoying himself much to his satisfaction. On presenting my passport from Navarino, he looked it carefully over, and then invited me to take coffee with him. It was a calm and warm evening, and the last sunset hues were lingering on the village and its romantic environs. A group soon formed around us, and became very inquisitive to know if we brought any news, or had heard any thing of the events of the war. They had not the smallest doubt of the success of their armies, and of glorious victories, of some of which they told marvellous tales. We had not long since come from Turkey, and they had many questions to ask respecting the late events there; they complained much of the conduct of some of the English vessels, which had assisted their enemies by carrying corn to them when reduced to extremity.

The French had obtained, at this time, the highest popularity, from the humanity of some

of their merchants and consuls to this unfortunate people. The French consul at Smyrna had saved the lives of some hundreds of wretched Greeks, whom the Turks were about to butcher: the active and intrepid humanity of this gentleman, on many occasions, was admirable. He had resolutely interposed between the murderers and the victims, and had either protected them whilst there, or procured them a passage to the Morea, or some of the Italian ports.

This worthy Greek magistrate had sent a messenger to look out a lodging for me, which was soon effected; and having finished our coffee and conversation, we took our leave of him. After rambling through one or two narrow streets, we came to our abode for the night, which stood in the midst of a large court; a long flight of steps, but so ruinous and narrow, that, being nearly dark, it required some caution to ascend them, led to an open corridor, which, according to the general construction of the Greek house, afforded shade and prospect at the same time: here the inhabitants love to

sit for many hours of the day. On entering the mansion, we found it consisted of two rooms, adjoining each other; the one contained only a large heap of flax in a corner, and the other, an old woman, who was watching a fire on which her supper-pot was boiling. She was so intent on her employment, that she was not aware of our entrance, till Michel demanded if she could give us any thing for supper. A chilling negative was the only reply; and we were fain to adjourn to the next apartment, and send out for some wine, which proved execrably bad: the poor Sciot refugees could scarcely be worse accommodated. The moon rose splendidly, however, and shone through the shattered windows of the poor woman's mansion; and by her light we laid ourselves down on the heap of flax to sleep. But it was unfortunately inhabited by myriads of insects, and it was impossible for one moment to close an eye; we were bitten nearly to death, and rising while the moon yet shone clearly, hurried our guides to proceed, and left the town with great good will.

We went on for a couple of hours, overcome



with sleep and fatigue, till the warmth of the sun cheered our spirits; the path was now amidst steep and rocky hills, but no signs of either village or cottage; indeed the whole tract seemed nearly uninhabited. Passing out from among the hills into a more open country, we came to a beautiful village on the summit of a rising ground. It would have tempted any one to stop and linger a few hours there, and we hailed it with delight. But what was our disappointment at finding it totally uninhabited, with the exception of one house, at the door of which a woman stood, who informed us it was impossible to procure the least refreshment there. It had been a Turkish village,—but its inhabitants, men, women, and children, had all been slain by the Greeks; and this wanton cruelty had desolated one of the sweetest spots we ever met with in Greece. It was embosomed in trees and gardens, had an uncommonly clean appearance, and a small and delicious stream of water ran through it. The white minaret of the lonely mosque was there, but the muezzin's voice was hushed; the gar-

den-shades, where the Moslem assembled each day to smoke and recline, were all deserted; and the fountains beside them gushed uselessly away. Yet the houses were entire, as when their possessors were murdered, but all empty and silent; and it stood amidst its woods on that rising ground, overlooking the plain below, a spectacle of beauty and of mourning: for each dwelling, no doubt, had contained its family, who, but a short time before, lived happy amidst the groves which now spread over their tombs! Its solitary inhabitant was a Greek woman, who had come here perhaps, because a good habitation might be so cheaply obtained. We left it with deep regret, execrating the barbarous manner of conducting this war, which so often doomed the innocent to perish with the guilty.

The aspect of the country soon became wilder, and the mountains rose loftier on each side; we wished to find our way to Messené, but the guide appeared to be ignorant of it. The day was now oppressively hot; and we had travelled six hours, after a wretched night's

lodging, and without breakfast, turning sometimes to one path, and then to another, but not coming in view of the object we sought. At last we succeeded in entering one of the long and rich valleys of Messené, bounded by high and noble mountains on each side: the Greeks were gathering in their harvest, for the valley had been sown thick with corn. It was bounded at the upper end by a high mountain, on the steep side of which, overhanging the valley, and in a bold and rugged situation, stood a spacious monastery.

At the foot of the mountain was a small Greek village; we made up to it, and ascending a flight of steps that conducted to one of the houses, met with a ready reception. We took possession of the apartment into which the flight of steps ushered us; it was small, with two windows, which overlooked the whole of the beautiful valley beneath, and the sea beyond. Excessively fatigued, I had no sooner taken some coffee, than making the floor my bed, I fell fast asleep, and did not awake, till the sultry heats of the day were over. It was

then delightful to walk out, at the foot of the mountain; the convent stood on a fearful steep overhead, where the monks' passion for loneliness was gratified to the full; no habitation sharing with them their lofty seat. Yet the prospect they possessed was glorious, with an air as pure as earth could furnish. About two hundred yards from the village, at the precipice's foot, was a fine fountain, that appeared to gush out of the rock, and was so thickly overhung by a mass of trees, that no ray of the sun could fall on it,—here the young women came almost every hour for water; a few of them were well made, with agreeable features, dark eyes, and a complexion not particularly fair; but their costume, their light step, and long tresses falling down behind, gave them a very Grecian appearance. This valley, covered with corn and pasture, studded with a few cottages, and opening so finely to the sea, was near the scite of the celebrated city of Messené. Several heaps of ruins were scattered about it, but of no great magnitude. The cool air of evening was most acceptable to our feelings.

The Grecian climate is very fine, and less sultry than those of the East, with nights almost equally pure, sunsets as magnificent, and equally free from rain. But, in general it cannot be called a very healthy climate, being in many parts extremely subject to fevers.

Returning to the Grecian cottage, the good people had prepared a very comfortable repast : we sat down beside the windows that looked over the valley and its mountain barriers ; and felt that glow of spirits which the vicissitudes of travelling, from hardship to comfort, and barrenness to beauty, so often give.

## LETTER XXV.

## GREECE.

THIS village, situated at the foot of Mount Ithomé, consists of but few cottages. Besides the beauty of its situation, the climate must be very fine; being shut out from all cold and sharp winds from the surrounding mountains, yet open to the sea at some distance in front. The monastery, on the summit of the mountain, is a very large building, too extensive, as is often the case, for the monks, who are, however, very comfortably situated, and have poultry in abundance, as well as mutton, and other good things. On and about this mountain are the ruins which yet mark the power and skill of the ancient Messenians: massive walls, inclosing a spacious area, in which are remains of two

gates, of considerable size and magnificence. Large fragments and piles of stones are found in various parts around these; and the rich verdure that partially shrouds them, gives some of them a picturesque appearance. The ruins of a theatre, possessed, however, of little beauty, are the most entire among them. It was not safe at present to remain long in this neighbourhood, as many of the Mainotes were wandering about; and, owing to the disorders of the country, it was vain to think of visiting Laconia.

We left the neighbourhood of Messené in the evening, and, turning to the right, passed up a narrow defile overhung with trees, among which were the ruins of a church. It became wider after a time, and opened on a long and gentle descent down the mountain side. This was covered with wood nearly to the foot; and we entered on a verdant and beautiful plain, inclosed by a noble amphitheatre of mountains. Not a single village or habitation was to be seen in its whole extent, yet the soil appeared extremely rich, and presented every advantage for tillage and habitation.

The daylight had left us, and we were wandering on the plain in the middle of a thick wood; for the guide had lost his way. We had lost all hope of finding any lodging better than the bare earth beneath the trees; and, in the present disordered state of the country, this was not a very safe alternative: it was quite dark, and the wood was so thick that it was difficult to discover any path, when we suddenly heard the voice of a woman. My servant called out in the Sclavonian language, and was answered in the same. Advancing, we discovered a cottage, inhabited by an Albanian and his family, who gave us a friendly welcome. The cottage consisted of one long and low apartment, which a fire, blazing in the middle, filled with smoke; amidst which, dimly seen, were the wife and children of the owner. Its appearance altogether was so dirty, that we declined the shelter of the roof, and preferred reposing on the ground without.

An excellent fire was kindled, and a crust of bread, with a little tea, formed our frugal supper. A few other peasants arrived and formed



a circle round the fire, and sat chatting till a late hour. These men had been at the storming of Tripolizza, and spoke of it with exultation, wishing that such an affair might soon occur again, as they longed for more plunder. My host, amidst the general massacre and capture, had secured a young Turkish woman, and brought her to his home. Her fate was very hard ; her husband had been slain in the storm, and she was no better than a slave in the house of her captor, and was treated with neglect and indignity : she was rather good-looking ; but her dejected and pale features showed that her misfortunes weighed heavily on her heart. This man had the baseness to offer to sell her to my servant for five piastres, but the latter had feeling enough to reject it with indignation.

These people, like all the rest of the Greeks, held the Mainotes in fear ; as much for their lawless and plundering habits, which they exercised on friends and foes, as for their bravery. " As several of them," the Albanians said, " were now in the neighbourhood, and generally made free to take what they pleased," we were

obliged to sleep almost with our arms in our hands. The night was very calm ; and the moon, rising from behind the high mountains, close on the left, shone beautifully on the forest, and the cottage of the Albanian ; and, lying down, in its light, on my coarse bed, in the open air, I soon fell fast asleep.

Next morning we crossed the plain, and again ascended the mountains. The path, by degrees, lost its rich verdure, and became barren and craggy ; but on descending, in a couple of hours, into another plain, the scenery was once more rich and varied. The only defect in the Grecian scenery is the want of water ; you seldom meet with a river, and for this reason, wells of cool and delicious water, dug deep in the earth, are to be met with frequently. The Eurotas is completely dried up, and the Kissus nearly so ; and you often pass over long tracts without finding the smallest stream.

About mid-day we halted beneath a tree on the summit of a mountain, and the country all around had a delightful and romantic appearance. The view extended over some of the

plains and mountains of Arcadia. The hills were, in general, covered to the summit, with verdure that afforded pasture for numerous flocks ; but the habitations were very few.

A little before sunset we rested for an hour by a fountain ; a Greek joined us from Tripolizza, to which city we were going. He brought us the news of a cruel event that he had seen perpetrated there a few hours before ; the massacre, in the streets, of twenty Turkish women, many of them of respectable condition. It was the deed of the soldiery, unauthorised by the officers, and was perfectly wanton and unprovoked. The shrieks and lamentations of these unfortunate women were enough to have moved any heart. Michel, a Greek in his descent, had hitherto, warmed by his love of the cause, resolved to join their ranks, and fight for their liberty, but changed his sentiments from that moment. He cursed the Greeks bitterly for their cold-blooded cruelty, and declared that Heaven would never prosper a cause disgraced by such deeds.

The way now led over a long and rugged

mountain, where we could proceed but slowly, and then descended into a wide and flat plain. The light was rapidly leaving us, when we fell in with some Mainotes, who had straggled from Colocotroni's army. This chief had suddenly raised the siege of Patras, without the consent of the Senate ; and his army had dispersed in various directions, while he was supposed to be marching on Tripolizza with a small body who adhered to him. These Mainotes urged us with great earnestness to spend the night with them at a small village on the plain, to which they pointed, and where, they said, they would kill a lamb for our supper. A body of sixty more of their comrades were about an hour's distance behind. We had previously intended stopping at this village, as it would be very late ere we could reach Tripolizza ; but their earnest invitation decided the matter. Among them and their fellows every thing we had would have quickly been taken, and perhaps our lives too. They were enraged at our refusal ; but, as we were on horseback, and they

on foot, we passed rapidly on, and soon got at a good distance.

It was now quite dark ; the moon being hid, the path became difficult and tedious ; and we were not a little rejoiced when we found ourselves close to the walls and towers of the town ere we perceived them. We knocked long and loud, and were answered from within by a shrill female voice, from an adjoining house, that no admission could be had. The guard at last came, but he absolutely refused to give us entrance at that time of the night. We waited at the gate for an hour, and had nearly given up all hope of an asylum for the night, when a well-dressed Greek, whom we had overtaken and passed in the course of the day, came up, and obtained admission for himself and us.

It being far advanced in the night, we demanded of the guard if he could not give us a lodging till morning ? The soldier willingly consented, and led the way through several narrow streets into a small court, where a flight

of steps conducted us to his dwelling. We were ushered into a neat inner apartment, the floor of which was covered with a carpet and cushions. A small lamp was placed in the middle, and a low table, spread with a cloth, was placed before me by the soldier's daughter, who soon after brought the materials for my supper. She was a fine Grecian girl, tall and well-made, and her jet-black hair hung down her back in long and graceful tresses. The tone of her voice was very sweet, and she did the honours of the house with the utmost agility and goodwill. The supper was a frugal one; but the transition from the dark and dangerous path we had passed, to the comfort of the Greek cottage, the lamp, the soft cushions, and the bright and kindly looks of the fair attendant, would have made a draught of water taste like the wine of Shiras. Several soldiers, friends of the host, soon after entered the apartment, and sat down with him and Michel to supper. They had taken part in the massacre of the unfortunate Turkish women this day; and their conversation turned wholly on this subject.

They talked of it with the utmost coolness. After their departure, making the carpet and cushion serve as my bed, fatigue made me soon enjoy a sweet repose.

The next morning we went to the office of the police, and presenting my passport from Navarino, I requested them to provide me with a good lodging; Nicolai, one of their body, rose up, and said he would conduct me to his house, where I should be well accommodated. Nicolai was a gentlemanly man, of an effeminate appearance; and before the Revolution, was in good circumstances, but was now reduced almost to poverty. He had still three good houses left, but they were useless, as no one inhabited them. The flight of many of the Greeks at the commencement of the war, and the slaughter of the Turks at the capture of the town, had quite thinned the population. The house to which he led me was tolerably spacious, with a garden, over which was a corridor, that looked on the mountains which bounded the plain. In a small part of this residence lived two sisters of Nicolai: the hus-

band of one had been murdered at Constantinople, but of this the poor woman was kept entirely ignorant, and still expected his return. Nicolai had a brother, who was, like himself, too timid to go to war. Their father had held an office of some importance under the Turkish Government in the town, and during the siege had been useful to many of his unfortunate countrymen, and assisted them to escape out of the town ; and, during the storm, the old man vainly thought this would have given him a title to mercy ; but he was slain among the rest, because he had held an employment under the Turks. His sons complained bitterly of the ingratitude of their countrymen in not sparing their father, all whose property also they had seized.

Tripolizza is situated in the middle of a large plain, the greater part of which is uncultivated : the mountains form an amphitheatre around it. The scene is altogether of an uninteresting character ; but the climate is pure and healthy. The town is large and ill-built ; and contained, a few months before, a large



population ; but this was now reduced to one-third. From its having few trees or gardens, it possesses little of an Oriental appearance. It is surrounded by a wall, about ten or twelve feet high, so much the reverse of formidable, that, when we first walked round it, we could not help laughing at the idea of its having employed an army of thirty thousand Greeks for some months to take it. One or two wells, sunk deep without the walls, form the chief supplies of water for the lower order of the inhabitants. The devastations occasioned by the capture of the place were visible on every side ; the finest palaces either wholly or partially in ruins. Like the Scotch reformers of Knox's days, the Greeks, in the impulse of the moment, appear to have thought only of destruction.

Near the western gate was a spacious and elegant palace of a Turk of high rank. Being very wealthy, he had adorned this house at great expense ; the apartments were richly gilded and painted, and overlooked the whole plain and mountains beyond. He was a man,

as his enemies allowed; of a mild and amiable character, and very generous. During the storm, he retired with his wife and his numerous children to an inner apartment, into which the captors soon burst their way, and all were slain. One son only was spared, and this unfortunate boy wandered about the streets without a home or a friend. He came one day to my apartment, and sat down very dejectedly: he had just been, he said, to the Senate, to endeavour to get some pittance allowed him, but in vain. The palace of his father was turned into a kind of barracks:—I frequently went there; the prospect from its windows is fine; but the rich apartments were filled by the lowest Greek soldiers, gaming, drinking, and destroying. In a small retired apartment were one day seated some renegade Greeks, who had changed their religion out of fear, and had been spared by their countrymen: they had with them two or three children of some of the Turkish lords, whom they appeared to treat with great kindness; and this was an excellent trait in their behaviour; they had been the de-

pendants of those families in their prosperity. One boy, whose noble descent was visible in every feature, and who still wore his turban and pink robe, was the son of one of the chief commanders.

Almost every day, in my walks without the walls, I passed by a heap of unburied bones of Turks, many of whom must have fallen in that spot. The town was not fairly taken, a circumstance that not a little aggravated the horrors attending its capture. After the siege had continued some months, and the garrison, which included a considerable part of its male population of all ranks, was reduced very low, a treaty was entered into for a capitulation : the Greek army, as agreed on, drew off to the mountains, and some stragglers only wandered near the walls, where the Turks were off their guard. Several peasants, who sold fruit, approached the rampart, and disposed of it to the Turks, a few of whom came down and mixed with them ; and some Greeks, who happened to be not far off, seeing the confusion and unguarded state of this part of the garrison and the town, climbed

on the walls, attacked the Turks suddenly, and, uttering loud cries, called to the troops on the hills, who rushed down tumultuously. The Mainotes first stormed the northern gate, and opened a passage for the entrance of the rest. The slaughter in the streets was immense ; men, women, and children, all perished ! every other passion was quenched in the bosom of the Greeks, except the thirst for blood. Numbers of the most beautiful women in Tripolizza were conducted to the small ravine without the town, and sabred without mercy. Between one and two thousand Albanian troops, who formed part of the garrison, were allowed to march out unmolested ; and being conducted to the nearest port, were embarked. Atrocities such as these often marked the conduct of each side, in the first period of the war. The Greeks, fortunately for their cause, have for some time adopted a more humane conduct, as in the capitulation of Napoli di Romania, where no violence was committed, and the garrison, together with the chief part of the population, were safely embarked for their own country.

The house in which the senate assembled every day at Tripolizza, had been a large and handsome Turkish dwelling; they did not seem to take their office very laboriously; pipes were generally in their hands, and the table, around which they sat, was covered with newspapers.

Affairs at this time were in a critical and alarming state: it was said that Raschid Pacha was advancing rapidly with forty thousand men. On the way to the city, we had heard some rumours of this kind, but so confused and contradictory, that little confidence was to be placed in them; but now they were spoken with greater confidence, and filled the minds of the Greeks with dismay. Colocotroni also had broke up the army with which he was besieging Patras, and it was not known what step he would next take. With their usual thoughtlessness, however, the Greeks continued to saunter about the coffee-houses, or play a kind of chess game: a universal amusement, for they were seen every hour of the day engaged in it, seated in the open air. The costume of these soldiers was light and graceful; a thin vest, sash, and a loose

pantaloon, which fell just below the knee. The head was covered with a small and ugly cap, as the Turks never allowed them to wear a turban. They had most of them pistols and muskets, to which many added sabres or ataghans.

The mosques in the city exhibited a curious appearance: they were very numerous, but the Greeks had strove to turn them into churches. The minarets were deserted; the Muezzins, as well as the Imauns, having all been slain. The sentences from the Koran, in large gold letters on the walls within, were, with great industry, partially or wholly effaced; and where the Imaun's pulpit stood, small altars were erected, and lamps were burning. But it was impossible to efface the Islamite features of the buildings; they looked as if Mohammed and the saints had become friendly, and agreed to be worshipped under the same roof. Although divine service was often performed there, very few of the Greeks ever attended: indeed the effect of the revolution thus far has certainly been to weaken the attachment of the Greeks to the religion of their country; and if it is protracted, it will, in

progress of time, like the revolution in France, perhaps first destroy the confidence and respect the people have been accustomed to give to their priests, and next discover to them the folly of the superstitions and ceremonies of their faith.

In the coffee-houses in Tripolizza we every day met with priests, mingling with the common soldiers, and frequently drinking with them. These ecclesiastics were sometimes obliged, against their will, to march in the ranks ; others served of their own accord, and their appearance, with a sabre at their side, pistols at their girdle, their priestly dress, and a long beard sweeping their breast, was sufficiently grotesque. Two or three of those poor pastors deplore the necessity that takes them from their peaceful avocations, and places them in the rank with the rudest of the populace, who soon lose all reverence for them. Indeed the growing disrelish of the people for the services of their church, is pretty evident, in their frequent desertion and neglect of them. The religion of Islam, also, since its foundation, had never

received so complete a downfall as here. Could the Prophet walk the earth again, and behold the utter ignominy and scorn cast on his name, his own houri-bowers would fail to console him afterwards. The very children in the streets spit on the earth at the sound of his name, and laugh at and execrate it in every possible way.

All the copies of the Koran that could be found, some of which were very elegant, were either burned or dispersed. An Imaum, the only one who was left alive in the city, and who was spared by the Greeks on account of the excellence and amiableness of his character, often came to visit me. His two sons had been slain. He had little left to live on, but drank his gratuitous wine with infinite relish, a luxury that seldom came in his way. He was extremely communicative, and bore his misfortunes with equanimity; complaining sometimes, however, that in his old age he was left desolate, and that his two sons had been murdered almost before his eyes! This horrible circumstance, whenever he permitted himself to dwell upon it,



seemed to convulse him with agony. He was a tall and mild-looking man, and, like most other Turks we had conversed with, not intolerant in his opinions; believing that people who professed other faiths would go to heaven, as well as the followers of the Prophet; though the latter would be favoured with the best place there,—a sentiment that could never be wrung from a Catholic, and seldom from a Greek, compared to whose bigotry that of the Mussulman is faint indeed. The Imaun, in the spoliation of his mosque, had saved a very handsome copy of the Koran, which he sold me. On asking him, if it was true that the Koran maintained that women did not go to paradise, he protested there was no such passage, and that no Turk held such a sentiment. Their belief, he said, was, that the women would not dwell in the same seats of bliss with the men, but that a separate paradise was provided for them, where they were all to live together.

It was very fortunate for us that we were lodged in Nicolai's house, as he was one of the police. His dwelling was respected, while a

number of others were entered, and plundered by the Mainotes, many of whom were in the town. These lawless fellows had belonged to the army besieging Patras, and cared not on what they laid their hands. A young French surgeon from Marseilles at this time resided in the city, and had obtained considerable practice, though he was very badly paid for it. Being the only man of his profession who possessed any skill in the place, he was much regarded both by the Senate and people; and numbers of the wounded, who were brought in at times from distant skirmishes, were indebted to his care. His house, however, was broken into by the Mainotes, and plundered of many articles. He went and complained to the Senate the next day, which expressed itself very angry at the outrage, but confessed that it had no power at that moment to prevent the disorders of the Mainotes. Many of these were uncommonly fine-looking men, and were the flower of the Grecian troops: they had been accustomed from childhood to habits of rapine, but paid implicit obedience to their chiefs; and on their native

hills of Laconia, their manner of life, as well as government, bore a close resemblance to those of the Highlands of Scotland as they were a century ago. Like the Suliots, brave and desperate, and fondly attached to their native mountains, which they would defend to the last gasp,—both are infinitely superior to the faithless and fickle Albanians, men who would at all times change their religion and their master for higher pay.

Walking through the streets, I met one day with an Italian adventurer, who had been engaged in the siege of the town, and had the direction of two light pieces of artillery,—all the Greeks were possessed of. These, in the storming, were brought into the streets, and were of singular use in demolishing some of the finest buildings. This scoundrel, without the smallest feeling of regret, pointed out to me the remains of a large palace, the walls of which were miserably shattered. The Greeks were unable to enter this mansion, as it was well defended; when he brought his two pieces of artillery into the narrow street that led to it, and at one discharge

blew open the then Turkish wall; the breach was instantly entered by the soldiers, who put all within to the sword. The Italian exulted in this exploit, and some others of a similar kind. He invited me earnestly to enter his house, to pass an hour or two, and I consented. He played uncommonly well on several instruments, but, like many of his nation, was a thorough villain and sensualist. He had a complete harem in his house, and in one apartment had eight or ten Turkish and Grecian women, chiefly the former. These unfortunate beings were perfectly friendless and poor: some of them probably had been respectable; but in danger of their lives, and turned out of their homes, they had been glad to find a roof and a maintenance on any terms. The Italian talked of them and their misfortunes with perfect coolness: he had no money himself, but received rations for each of them every day from the Government; and thus they were supported. It was a matter of perfect indifference to this fellow which side he espoused, the Greeks or the Turks, so long as he could live as he wished.

Several other adventurers, of a similar stamp, were in the town.

The coffee-houses were generally full, great part of the day, with soldiers and citizens ; the former from different parts of the Morea. In a narrow street, where an awning was suspended over a bench before the door, was a shop where very good coffee was to be had ; and here we took our seat every day. It was often amusing to hear the boasting of many of the people, of their prowess and victories, and those they were yet to gain. A priest sometimes came and seated himself on the bench ;—even the war did not make the good fathers forget their avocation, for they were absurdly building a new church at this time in the town, when the money might have been much better applied to the war. A Mainote would come, take his pipe, and look wildly round him, or sing one of his mountain songs. A very handsome young Greek, who had been a merchant, but was now a soldier, was pointed out to me as having met with adventures, and passed through scenes of peril and of love, very like some of those in the life of Anas-

tasius. Unquestionably that work is drawn more from real life, than romance; for what creature is capable of sustaining so many characters, braving, dissembling, and finally extricating himself out of every difficulty so well as a subtle, clever, and elegant Greek?

Many of the unfortunate Sciots had found their way to Tripolizza, men and women of various ranks. It was easy to discover that the light step, laughing yet seducing eye, and animated features, did not belong to the women of the north of the Morea. Several of these Sciots, still possessing enough of these characters to mark their native home, but faded from what they were in their own isle, were to be seen at times wandering through the streets. Many of them, of both sexes, had taken up their abode in a good-sized house, and earned a scanty living by selling cakes and sweetmeats. The finest women in Greece are probably the Albanians, or the Suliotes; but those of the Morea are inferior in personal attractions to the inhabitants of the isles: the Athenian woman are in general considered to be plain.

## LETTER XXVI.

## GREECE.

THE scenes of distress presented in some parts of Tripolizza were of the most affecting kind. Several Turkish families were fortunate enough to escape the general massacre at the storming, by secreting themselves, or were spared by the mercy of the captors. Some of these had been among the first and most opulent families in the city. Fortunate were the few who, amidst the general wreck, had saved a little money; however small the sum, it was now of inestimable use; but others had fallen into the greatest poverty, and scarcely enjoyed the necessaries of life.

Reduced more by misery than poverty, was

the family of an Aga, consisting of the mother and five children. This lady was an amiable and agreeable woman, of middle age: her eldest daughter was about sixteen; Constantine, the son, was rather younger; and three children completed the group. A fine young Turkish woman, about eighteen years of age, an intimate friend of the family, had resided with them through all their misfortunes, her own parents having been put to death. They lived perfectly retired, never daring to come into the street, and scarcely to quit the solitude of their apartments; and the place of their retreat was known but to few. The Aga was secreted in another part of the town, but his family knew only that he existed, being ignorant of the place of his retreat. I sometimes visited this unfortunate Turk: he had received five wounds at the capture of the place, and had languished ever since, neglected and destitute of every attention that his condition required. He was a noble-looking man, and displayed amidst his sufferings a great deal of dignity and fortitude. It was a pleasure to have it in my power to alleviate



his unhappy condition, as well as that of his desolate family. He always inquired affectionately for his wife and children, whom he had not seen since their separation at the storming of the town, and manifested the greatest desire to see them once more ; but this was impossible, and was a luxury he was doomed never to enjoy. The nights were now sometimes rather cold, and he had only the floor for his couch, without any covering ; a few months before he had lived in his palace, in the midst of affluence, and in the bosom of his family. The sight of them now, the voice of affection in his lonely chamber, would have been rich consolation to him ; but he dragged on existence with little prospect, except of death. Wounded, unpitied, and in pain, he was even in this state plundered ; for a useful addition to his clothing, that was sent him, was taken from him the next day by some unfeeling Greeks. Yet his look never lost its pride, nor was one murmur at his fate ever heard to proceed from his lips. He entreated me to use no efforts to make his son Constantine a Christian : a task, which I had neither industry

nor skill to execute. This unfortunate youth had been secreted by his mother in an inner apartment, for fear some of the Greek soldiers should enter and put him to death, while they spared the women. She implored us to try to save him, by either taking him out of the country on our departure, or keeping him secluded in our own house. We promised, if it were possible, to do both, and, in the mean time, conveyed him to the dwelling of Nicolai; but in going through the streets we were exposed to some danger, for several Mainotes encountered us, who, seeing the young Turk, grew enraged, and threatened to kill him, cursing the Englishman's interference on his behalf; but Michel, who never went out without being completely armed with his double-barrelled musket, sabre, and pistols, presented rather too formidable an aspect for an attack at that moment, and we lodged poor Constantine in an upper chamber in safety. Nicolai and his brother made violent remonstrances against it, saying that the Mainotes would certainly break into the house, when they knew of the Turk's being

there, and we should all run the risk of being murdered ; but, fortunately, these men never paid us a visit. This ill-fated youth often abandoned himself to grief, and wept every day over the misfortunes of his family.

There were many Europeans in Tripolizza who had come to fight for the Greeks : the greater part of them were needy adventurers ; and were mostly French and Germans. A young Englishman had landed at Navarino a few days before, for the sole purpose of assisting to restore the liberties of Greece. His name was H——y, of a highly respectable family of Hull ; but his enthusiasm outstripped his prudence ; he spoke no language but his own, and his finances, on account of his stay at Paris by the way, were very reduced. His arms were rich and expensive, his fusil and pistols being embossed with gold ; and his courage was sufficient to cope with any perils. He was tall and handsome in his person, of a remarkably amiable disposition, and, during the short time he was in Greece, attracted the regard of all who met with him ; but his constitution had never

been accustomed to a sultry climate. After staying a few days in Tripolizza, he joined a detachment of Greeks who were ordered to march against a body of the enemy. It was in the month of July, the weather was excessively hot, and he was on foot, as were all the Greeks ; but they are admirable walkers, and travel from morning till night with impunity, without complaining : the effects of which poor H——y soon felt dreadfully. He was accompanied by a young French gentleman, only eighteen years of age, embarked in the same chivalric cause. The Englishman's feet soon became so miserably blistered, that he could with difficulty keep up with the rest of the troops. On the second day the Turkish cavalry, detached from the army of Courschid Pacha, came in sight : the Greeks no sooner perceived them advancing rapidly, than they began to fly to the mountains, which were not far off, calling on H——y and his companion to keep up with them. But this was not in the power of the former—the state of his feet rendered it impossible ; and he gradually fell so far behind, that he was soon left alone

with his unfortunate companion, who would not desert him. The Turks were now at hand, and attacked them; they fought for a few moments desperately, but were quickly cut down, side by side, and, after being plundered of their arms, were left unburied on the spot where they fell. A German who belonged to this detachment, and was an eye-witness of the whole, but who had found refuge with the rest in the mountains, gave me two or three days afterwards the account of this unfortunate affair.

But, among the sufferers at Tripolizza, no one was more interesting than a Turkish lady, of the name of Handivia Dudu. She was a widow, and only eighteen years of age: her husband, together with her parents, were put to death at the taking of the town. After his house had been entered and plundered by the Greeks, and he had been compelled to give up all his property to them, they promised to spare his life, on condition that his wife would produce all her ornaments and jewels, which she had concealed. She sent them to the captors without a moment's hesitation, too happy to

purchase her husband's life at such a price. When the Greeks found they had obtained every thing, they told the Turk to prepare to die. He knew them too well to doubt the execution of their purpose, and only requested he might be allowed to see his wife once more. "They suffered him," said Handivia, "to lay his head upon my bosom for a few minutes only; then they took him from my arms, and murdered him!" No violence was offered her, however, and she resided at this time with two Greek women, in a very good house, but retired from the street, all communication with which was carefully excluded. An air of settled melancholy had fixed itself on her fine countenance, and in relating the tale of her miseries she was much affected. "She never could love again," she said, "in this life: her husband, to whom she had been married only a few months, was her first and only love, and her happiness perished with him." Her situation was truly a desolate one: every friend she had on earth slain, encompassed by dangers, she was often the prey of the liveliest alarms, and, not knowing in whom

to confide, she was unable to stir from the house, for fear of insult or violence from the Greeks. "Often," said the ill-fated lady, "I wished for death, as my only refuge." Her eyes and hair were of the purest black; her stature rather below the middle size, and possessing the quality valued so highly by the Turks—an excess of *embonpoint*. Her complexion was exquisitely delicate, but colourless; and her hand and arm had a beauty that could not be surpassed. But Handivia, like most of her countrywomen, had few intellectual resources; she spoke Romaic as well as Turkish; but her mind had never been cultivated; and her fine, large Oriental eye was lighted up only by deep feeling, or impassioned recollections. Seated on the sopha, her dark ringlets falling on the soft swell of her bosom, with an elegant chibouque in her hand, or engaged in embroidery, which she worked with exquisite taste, the Turkish beauty passed the greater part of the day. Her temper was perfectly amiable and mild, yet it was easy to perceive, from the occasional ardour of her expressions,

when recalling the past happy hours of her life, that her heart was capable, like that of many of her sex in the East, of an intense and devoted attachment. Owing to the custom of the Orientals of excluding the women from the mosques, and from all external form of worship, they are often grossly ignorant of their own religion ; and this lady was quite unacquainted with her Koran, its laws, punishments, or its glowing promises. The prospect of meeting her murdered husband in Paradise opened not to her ; the Prophet having forbidden the foot of woman to enter the same bowers of bliss. Even the promise of a separate heaven for the fair was lost on her ; for she opened one day a gold-illumined copy of the book of faith, read carelessly a few passages, then threw it down in disgust.

Scenes of violence and atrocity took place almost every day in Tripolizza, which stained the pure and glorious cause of Liberty ; but the soldiers were not always under the control of their officers, who did not, in general, license these excesses. The wretched Turks,



about five hundred of whom had been left alive, and who now went about the streets poor and friendless, were often put to death out of mere wantonness, and their bodies were left exposed in the street. It was enough to touch the hardest heart to see the condition of this people. A short time before, in Damascus and Rhodes, we had seen them haughty and arbitrary, splendidly dressed, and treading the earth as if it were only created for them. Here they were prostrate in the dust, trampled on, the noble and ignoble, by the lowest Greek; and when they walked through the streets, it was with a trembling step and fearful and suspicious look, as if they dreaded a dagger or pistol at every corner. As we stood one morning in the market-place, near a crowd of Mainotes and Greeks, three unhappy Turks rushed by, closely pursued by several of the latter with weapons in their hands: the liveliest terror was visible in the countenances of these unfortunate men, as they strove to outstrip their pursuers; but it was in vain, for in the next street they were overtaken and put to death.

But the desolation of a state like this fell with most force on the softer sex. A Turkish lady, who had lived in affluence, often came to the house of Nicolai, to solicit charity of the strangers. Her supplication was irresistible, for she always brought her two children with her, one in each hand, and, weeping bitterly, told of their desolate condition since their father was slain. This mother's lament was often present to our imagination afterwards.

As the plain of Mantinea was only a few hours' ride from the city, we set out on a fine afternoon to visit it. A young Greek merchant had engaged to accompany us, but he rode on before to find a place that might afford us some accommodation. The way was over the plain, which was totally destitute of interest, being little cultivated, and barren of trees. Turning to the left, we quitted this plain, and entered on another, narrower, and more varied, which led to that of Mantinea. The sun had set ere we arrived at it, and it became quite dark as we ascended the hills; the way was rugged and winding, and it was difficult to discern it. A

light appeared not far off, and, guided by the sound of a stream falling over the rocks near it, we came to a poor cottage, where a Greek woman directed us to the house of the priest, situated higher up the mountain. The good pastor came out to receive us, and we found within our acquaintance the Greek, who assured us of being well lodged here. We spread our mattress on the floor; the lamp was suspended from the ceiling; and the women of the house, who now and then put their curious faces into the room, were ordered to prepare our supper. The good father was married, and had a household of several women, consisting, no doubt, of his wife and daughter. The merchant showed himself a bad caterer; for, instead of a cheerful repast, a solitary dish only made its appearance, the nature of which it was difficult for some time to discover. It turned out, however, to be composed of eggs and cheese fried together, and, though novel, was very good; and some indifferent wine accompanied it. After the supper was finished, several Greeks came in from other cottages, and

the conversation became animated. One of them undertook to sing for our amusement ; it was a Moreot song, all about Georgis, one of their heroes, but not of the present day. The song and the sound too were very dismal, and we were obliged to listen to them for the best part of an hour. At last we all lay down on the floor, and soon enjoyed an oblivion of our cares.

The next morning, soon after sunrise, the scene from without, near the cottage, was beautiful in the extreme. The dwelling stood on a green bank in the highest part of the mountain, and looked down on the plain of Mantinea, directly beneath. At the foot of the opposite mountains were scattered some cottages, and the harvest was gathering in on the few cultivated spots around. Near the priest's habitation was a fine old tree, and we took our breakfast beneath its shade, enjoying the magnificent view around and beneath. The luxuries of sight and sense were both gratified at the same time ; for this early mountain-breakfast consisted of eggs, new milk, and

excellent honey, with Mocha coffee, and cakes just baked on the earth.

We soon after rode down into the plain, with the pastor for our guide. It is small and inclosed by a double amphitheatre of mountains, the furthest chain rising higher than that in the front; and appears admirably fitted for a field of battle. On the right is the eminence where the Athenian infantry were posted, and this is the only elevation in the plain: the Theban line of battle would appear to have extended directly across the plain, beginning at the foot of the mountain, near to which the pastor pointed as being the spot where, according to tradition, Epaminondas fell. The site of Mantinea is distinctly to be traced, not very far from the field of battle; the remains of the walls, which are about two miles and a half in circumference, are about two feet in height all around, and eight or ten feet thick. In winter, these ruins, as well as great part of the plain, are covered with water, and appear like a vast marsh; but at present the soil was perfectly dry, and covered with verdure. On

the eminence is the ruin of a small edifice, which is possessed of little interest.

Except a few cottages on the face of one of the mountains, there was not a single habitation throughout the whole scene. Our reverend guide now took leave of us, and we rode slowly over the plain. It was mid-day, and excessively hot, and we wished for some welcome shade. At some distance, on the right, were several rude tents, of a peculiar kind, used by the peasants of the country, to screen them from the heat: they consist of four poles, fixed on the ground, with a canopy of leaves and branches for a roof. We took refuge beneath one of these, near which were two or three peasants, each of them armed: they brought us some milk and excellent fresh butter. The Greek merchant, who took better care of himself than of his friends, produced a couple of excellent fowls from his pocket, of the existence of which we had not previously the least idea. We were completely screened from the heat, and enjoyed an excellent view over the plain; and were induced to remain till the cool of the

evening, when we had an agreeable ride back to Tripolizza.

The weather had been for a long time uniformly delightful: since we left Cyprus, the sky had seldom been clouded, and it had rained only once. The nights were so calm and mild, that we always slept under the open corridor in the garden. It was now July, the hottest month in the year, but except about mid-day, the heat was never very oppressive.

The chief food of the lower orders appeared to be vegetables; of fruit there was very little; and even in the houses of the senators the wine was execrable. The only meat we could procure was mutton, and the only luxury some excellent honey: the Greeks are very fond of blending the two together in their cookery; and a stew of mutton and honey, which we often had, was a very good dish. This town was never considered a place of luxury by the Turks. The women, it is true, were some of the finest in Greece, and one would imagine this circumstance to be all-sufficing without other attractions; though it must be confessed

that the dearth of trees, gardens, and fountains, with the barren plain around, and the still more barren mountains in the distance, presented a different scene from the luxuriance of Nature encircling the Syrian towns and cities.

Being desirous of seeing the style of dancing of the Greek women, of which we had heard so much, Nicolai engaged some of the best dancers in the place, and had a supper provided on the occasion, which is always the custom here. These dancers displayed a great deal of skill : their movements were slow ; and forming a circle, they joined their hands, and moved in exact unison with their feet, to the sound of the guitar. This was played by a Turk, who was a master of his instrument. He had secreted himself at the capture of the town ; and probably his skill on the guitar had some share in inspiring the mercy he afterwards experienced, as he often attended the convivial parties of the Greeks. He was accompanied by his daughter, who was an exquisite dancer ; and one or two



gentlemen, with an Englishman, completed the party.

The history of this gentleman's enterprize for the fallen glories of Greece is less tragical than H——y's. E—— had landed at Calamata from Malta, whence he brought one or two letters of introduction. He had brought one addressed to the Senate from an English gentleman, distinguished for his love of, and exertions for, the cause. Unable to speak any language save his own, his intercourse with the Moreots was, of course, likely to be very circumscribed. Being rather ignorant of the nature of the country he had entered, on landing near Calamata he walked into the town, and left his trunk on the beach, under the care of some Greeks. While these worthies were keeping guard over it, five or six Mainotes came up, and presented their muskets at the Greeks, who took to flight. Poor E——'s trunk, containing his money, clothes, and books, was quickly ransacked by these fellows, who, not contented with the more convertible part of the contents, carried off

“ Lalla Rookh ” and “ Don Juan,” which chanced to be part of them. It would be worth while to know the subsequent fate of these volumes, made companions of the Mainotes’ wanderings ; an additional canto might certainly be made out of the adventures of the latter. On his arrival at Tripolizza, in company with a young Greek colonel, E—— applied to the Senate to recover his lost effects, who very civilly told him they could do nothing in the business. He had an excellent cavalry sword, and pistols, but as the Greeks had no horse, his prowess in this way was likely to be little called for. He was brave, however, and longed, on his arrival, to be engaged in active service. But, when he saw the inconveniencies and hardships to which he was sure to be exposed, and, above all, when he heard the unfortunate end of H——y, whom he knew, his zeal considerably abated. He was lodged at the house of one of the senators, a quiet old man, who seemed much fonder of his pipe than of discussing the affairs of the war. Having studied medicine, the Englishman’s skill was

put in requisition by many of the sick people of Tripolizza. A detachment, under the command of the Greek colonel, his acquaintance, was ordered to march to Argos, and E——, and some other Europeans, were directed to join them. Among the latter were two Italians, who had arrived in the same vessel with him, from Malta. They were needy adventurers, scantily provided with clothing: each of them, however, took care to furnish himself surreptitiously with a coat. The rights of proprietorship did not seem to enter into their consideration. Like Falstaff, they were ready to “take any man’s horses,” and garments too. They all set out for Argos in the evening, and, marching all night, arrived there next morning. But they had not been there above two days, when the alarm was given that the cavalry of the enemy were drawing near. The cry was raised throughout the place, “The Turks are coming.” The inhabitants instantly took to flight, after setting fire to part of the town. Most of them took the way to Moulin, a small sea-port about two hours’ distance. E——,

giving up at once his hopes of glory, and abandoning Greece to its fate, joined the throng, and took flight on foot for the same place; where he had the good fortune to get on board a bark, and arrived in safety at Malta. Should this page meet his eye, it will revive the memory of his bloodless expedition, with the recital of which he has more than once amused an evening circle at home.

The Europeans who came to Greece at this time were very badly off. The Greek Government could not afford them any pay; and a ration of bread and meat, and sometimes a little wine, was the utmost they received. Many of them appeared, like Prospère and his companions, in want of clothing. To them it was a war of little emolument or glory; yet they bore their privations and hardships, particularly the Germans, with great patience and fortitude. There was a regiment of four hundred of these men, under the command of a Frenchman, who had the title of General Normein, and they fought bravely on several occasions. But they

gained as little by success as they lost by defeat. Indeed, the only order of people who appear to have been gainers by the Revolution, are the Greek peasantry: all the taxation and oppressions they were used to, are taken off their shoulders, and they enjoy the full produce of their labours, without any master or landlord to share with them. And even the war does not fall very heavily on them, as they serve only for a few months, and then return to their homes, to cultivate their lands. The harvest of this year was so uncommonly productive, that they said they could carry on the war for two years on the produce of this, without any further exertions in agriculture during that period.

The Greek merchants are, perhaps, the greatest sufferers by the war. Many of them with whom we met, deplored the loss of great part or the whole of their property; their houses, merchandizes, or ships, had all, more or less, suffered. Those who resided on the coast of Asia Minor, Syria, or in some of the isles, had been

obliged to quit their homes precipitately, and leave their effects to the mercy of the Turks. Others, whose property lay in Patras, Napoli, &c. found it now useless, as the Turks were in possession of these places: one merchant, who was the owner of several dwellings in Patras, complained he was half ruined, as they were now of no profit to him. Many a lucrative branch of commerce was, of course, now entirely closed to them. Some of these men were not patriotic enough to rejoice in the change of affairs: one of them, who had lost ninety thousand piastres, asked with energy, of what use was the war to him, as it had turned him out of a good dwelling and many luxuries, and compelled him to live on a bare competency?

Some of the generals, particularly Colocotroni, have, perhaps, taken care of themselves: report says, the latter has had his share of the spoil on most occasions. In Tripolizza, little was found, except arms, that could benefit the Government. The private plunder was scattered amongst the soldiers, some of whom were comparatively enriched. Ladies' ornaments,

rich dresses, and furniture, might be purchased soon after the capture at a very cheap rate: arms embossed with silver, were often in the hands of common soldiers. But the rich divans of the Turkish palaces had altogether disappeared; the walls and floors were entirely naked; the gardens were suffered to run wild, and the most magnificent apartments became the scenes of riot of the soldiery.

The seraglio of Courschid Pacha was also captured. The Greeks had the prudence not to put to death, or offer any rude treatment to these ladies, knowing it would exasperate the Pacha to extremity; but they accepted his offer of a large sum for their ransom, and sent them safely away.

A little Turkish boy of ten years of age, had been saved from the fate of his family by some of the Greeks, and was now treated with kindness, and suffered to walk about the streets. Every effort had been used by his captors to induce this child to be baptized, and become a Christian; but he showed a firmness surprising for his age, always resolutely refusing to aban-

don the faith of his fathers, and, when menaced even with death if he did not consent, declaring he would rather die than become a Christian. But his captors, though they put him to the severest tests, were too humane to have recourse to the last expedient.



## LETTER XXVII.

## GREECE.

THE state of affairs now became very alarming: it was known for certain that Courschid Pacha and his army were rapidly advancing. Rumour had magnified this force extremely, but it was now understood to consist of at least thirty thousand men. The Turks seemed on this occasion to have entirely abandoned their indolent and dilatory way of carrying on a campaign, and were pouring down like a torrent. Courschid had pledged himself to the Sultan to subdue the Morea this campaign; and his fine army, the flower of which were a thousand cavalry, almost justified the boast. The Greeks were taken entirely unprepared, and had no force in the field to oppose the enc-

my : divisions among the senators and the chiefs had distracted their counsels.

The alarm at Tripolizza was excessive on the first intelligence of the rapid approach of the Turks. The Government ordered all the shops to be closed : the people assembled in the streets, and formed into groups, all conversing on the terrible news with pale and panic-struck countenances. The next day, rumours of a contrary nature arrived : the shops were ordered to be opened again, and the hopes of the people revived. But, on the third morning, the intelligence was brought, that the Turkish cavalry had taken the isthmus of Corinth, which was left shamefully undefended ; and that the main army was close behind. The consternation that instantly spread itself over the town was dreadful ; but when, not long after, it was known that the Turkish cavalry were at Argos, you would have thought that Courschid was already at the gates of Tripolizza. It was now evening ; Argos was only seven hours' distance from the town, and the cavalry of the enemy

could easily arrive in the course of the night. The most unsparing and indiscriminate slaughter was sure to follow their arrival: for they had the massacre of their own countrymen at Tripolizza to revenge; and the Greeks could expect no mercy. The cries and wailings of women were heard in the streets, all wishing to fly: some weeping over their children, and imploring succour; others preparing to take their way over the plain, and commit themselves to their fate. Nicolai's sisters gave way to the madness of their terror, and he was too much frightened himself to encourage them.

Thus passed the night; the next morning came, and still the Turks remained at Argos. This gave breathing-time to the terrified inhabitants of Tripolizza. Many had fled in the night. The women and children were now enabled to depart on horseback. All sought the mountains, where they were assured of being safe from the enemy's cavalry. On the second day from the alarm, the town was two-thirds emptied. On walking about the streets,

we were surprised to find them so deserted; scarcely a woman remained behind, and the senate had most of them joined in the flight.

The Turks who were in the town were very unfortunately situated at this moment, since the Greeks were resolved, had Courschid's cavalry advanced from Argos, to put all who remained of the Mussulman nation to the sword, as they were certain themselves of finding no mercy from the enemy.

The stern barriers of Turkish etiquette were entirely broken down in these unhappy times. At Constantinople or Damascus, it would have been impossible for a traveller to have found admission into the interior of Turkish families; but in Tripolizza, the war had overthrown, in a good measure, the old *regime*.

A singular scene was presented in a dwelling to which we one day found our way. In one long and large apartment were crowded a great number of Turks of all ages, sexes, and conditions: ladies of rank were mingled with the lowest orders; their dress and hair in the utmost disorder, for many of them had been wounded,

and there was no medical aid, no hand of kindness, to alleviate their condition ; some lay stretched on the floor, others crowded together in a small space : they could not dare to stir out of their retreat, for fear of the people. It was an event so new to them to find that any one took an interest in their fate, that they poured out their feelings in the name of Alla and the Prophet with great sincerity. The resignation and patience with which they bore their misfortunes were admirable ; no upbraidings against Providence, no fruitless repinings were heard ; but it was the will of Heaven, they said, and they submitted to it.

Early in the morning we went to the house of Handivia : all those of her country were so unfortunately situated, that the arrival of their own army would be the greatest calamity that could befall them. She was excessively agitated, and busied in preparing for instant flight to the mountains. What could be more friendless than the situation of this ill-fated young lady ; the past was full of miserable recollections, and the future presented nothing to hope for : every relative

and friend cut off, and in the midst of enemies, whom any casual exasperation might urge to inflict on her the same fate. Just before her departure, her friend, the young lady spoken of before, who had been the companion of the Aga's family in all their distresses, came to bid her farewell. It was a touching scene; the former, whose features were quite faded with sorrow, and who seemed to yield helplessly to its power, threw herself into Handivia's arms: they embraced each other passionately, and clasped their hands, and wept, and then mourned aloud at being compelled thus to part, without a hope of ever meeting again. But the danger was pressing, and Handivia hastened to depart, without a friend to aid or protect her in that perilous journey. Misfortune, however, had not yet done persecuting her: she had not advanced above two hours' distance, when she met some Mainotes, who plundered most of her rich dresses and other effects, and then suffered her to proceed, without offering her or the two Greek women who attended her, the smallest

personal injury; and they reached the retreat in the mountains in safety.

Had the Turkish cavalry at this time advanced to Tripolizza, they could not have met the slightest resistance. There was scarcely any force in the town, and the country between it and Argos, though mountainous, was quite undefended. It is difficult to account for the supineness of the enemy, which proved, however, extremely fortunate in the then disordered state of the country. The French surgeon called on me, with a large sabre at his side: he was resolved, he said, not to leave the town, but to stand his ground, and remain to the last with the people among whom he had come to spend his life. Prospère and his companions, from Navarino, had also found their way here a few days before: they had marched on foot, and were overcome with fatigue and the privations on the way. The first was very ill when he arrived, of a fever, from the heat and the long journey, but under the care of the surgeon he soon recovered. He was resolved, however,

like a true Frenchman, not to be cast down or despair, and, though the war had rather a discouraging aspect, yet he would play his part. He soon had an opportunity ; for he was quickly after, with his companions, ordered to march out in company with a small Greek detachment, towards Argos.

All the distress, however, at this period, did not fall on the Turks, but some of the Greek families drank deeply of the bitter cup. They could expect little mercy from the enemy, and they knew, from the experience of the dreadful scenes of Scio, what would be the fate of their wives and daughters. In one of the most respectable families of the town, of the name of S——, a scene was presented on the first day after the alarm of the Turks' approach, that could have occurred perhaps only in Greece. On many occasions during this glorious struggle for their liberty, the Grecian women have displayed a fortitude and daring worthy of the brightest days of their history ; but these qualities have sometimes had a degree of the barbarous and unfeeling mingled with them. This



family consisted of a mother and three daughters. The two elder were married to Greek officers, who were at this time with the army ; the youngest, Emeraldal, was a beautiful girl of eighteen years of age, superior in accomplishments to most of her countrywomen, for she had resided a short time in Russia, and understood French. Except some skill in the guitar and the dances of their country, the Greek girls have little to boast of, and are very insipid companions. The family of S. had been affluent, but the circumstances of the war had reduced them, in common with very many others, to a mere competency. The house in which they resided in the best street of the town, was a very good one, and well furnished in the Greek style. The eldest sister was a woman of commanding mind and unshaken resolution : she, in common with her family, bore a deadly hatred to the Turks, and the thought of their sacking the town and satiating their revenge was agony to her feelings. She took an extraordinary determination, and did not hesitate to express it in the strongest terms, which was, to put her young

and engaging sister to death, on the Turks entering the town. A friend of the family called on me the same morning, and related the circumstance with expressions of sorrow and indignation, for he had just left the house. Struck at so strange a resolution, we hastened to intercede, and preserve the Greek beauty from the fate that hung over her ; but every entreaty was in vain. We then offered without delay to procure horses and quit the town, taking the road to the coast, and thus convey this helpless girl out of the reach of the enemy ; or should we encounter them, the firman of the Sultan, which we carried, would prevent any violence from being offered. But the eldest sister was stern and inflexible. “ I know what will be her fate,” she said, pointing to Emeraldalda, who was weeping bitterly. “ Were death all, she should never receive it from me : it matters less for me and my other sister, who are married, and are no longer young—death will be our portion ; but, sooner than she, so young and beautiful, should be the prey of the Turks, I will plunge a dagger in her heart with my own

hand." And she would have dared to do what she said; for her eye flashed with fury as she spoke, and she used the most impassioned gestures. The poor girl, by her sorrow, showed that the prospect of such a death was in no way welcome to her; but she had not power to escape it of her own accord, for in this country the elder female branches of a family often exercise a kind of arbitrary authority over the younger. She stood bathed in tears, in another part of the room, and her long dark tresses fell dishevelled down her neck: she uttered no reproach or complaint, knowing it was useless to oppose the resolve of her elder sister. It was a fine scene for a painter; for her features were strictly Grecian, and her figure about the middle size, while that of her sister was large and unwieldy, but her countenance was haughty and resolute. Each renewed effort to move this woman's resolution, or induce her to consent to the flight of her sister, with every assurance of honourable and kind treatment, was in vain; no, she would not suffer her to go with those of another religion and country, be exposed to various vicissi-

tudes, and perhaps some unhappy destiny in the end, unknown to her family. But, for the honour of her sex, this lady's hand was not imbrued in the blood of her beautiful sister. The Turkish cavalry, contrary to hope, did not approach the town: the best use was made of the time, and on the following day, the three daughters and their mother left the town on horseback, and fled to the mountains, where they were safe. The name of Bobolina,\* the eldest, for so she was called, has not been quite unknown during the Revolution. On more than one occasion, during the war, she has distinguished herself by her heroic efforts in the cause of her country; and had a few of the Greek commanders been gifted with her fierce and unyielding spirit, their oppressors would long ago have left their shores.

But the hopes of the people grew brighter

\* An account of this Grecian Amazon, and of the circumstances which led to her violent death, will be found in Mr. Emerson's Journal of his residence among the Greeks.—See "A Picture of Greece in 1825," page 162-3.

when they heard that Colocotroni was approaching with a small force, as they put confidence in the bravery of this general. He drew near the town on a fine evening. We went out on the plain to see the march: it was not a very imposing spectacle. There were about nine hundred men, who marched in a rather disorderly manner. The chief was in the middle: he was a tall and stout man, with a fierce countenance; he seemed to be about the middle age, and had evidently passed through many and trying changes of fortune. His nephew was with him, and several other chiefs; a French officer, of some experience, always accompanies this general. The troops were well armed, and were, in general, good-looking men, but without any discipline. The forces of each village are accustomed to go to war beneath their own banner; so that there were as many flags as colours in the rainbow: blue, green, white, and yellow, all floated above the heads of this redoubted army. A few poor ragged Europeans were mingled in the ranks. Firing their muskets, and saluting their acquaintance, they entered the

town, and their arrival diffused amazing confidence.

The measures of Colocotroni were full of energy and decision, and well suited to the urgency of the moment. Feeling, however, that he now had the authority, he assembled the Senate next morning, and bullied them without mercy ; telling them he knew they loved nothing so well as to pass their hours smoking and lounging, or in the company of their pretty Turkish captives ; while the fatigues of the war fell on him and his officers : that they had better attend with vigour to the affairs of the country, and strive to rescue her out of her present dangerous condition. He summoned instantly all the forces and peasantry from different parts to assemble at Tripolizza, and march with him, without delay, against the Turks. Intelligence of the general's resolution to oppose the further advance of the Pacha, flew like lightning. In the course of the following day, a division of several hundred men arrived. Colocotroni now issued an order commanding that every person in Tripolizza above twelve years of age, should join his

forces, under pain of death. The soldiers were to be seen in the streets pursuing the boys to oblige them to join the ranks; some entered with good will, others ran away in affright. Nicolai and his brother shrugged their shoulders at the thought of fighting: the former's office in the police was an excuse, while the latter kept out of the way. On the second day, troop after troop arrived, marching in with infinite vivacity and willingness, and welcomed with loud shouts: among them was a division of Mainotes, very fine men, fresh from their native mountains. About three thousand troops entered in the course of this and the next day, under various banners. The most unbounded confidence now succeeded to the constant alarms which, for several days, had agitated the people: they felt they were now free from any sudden attack, and knew that their general, by posting himself, as was his intention, in the passes of the mountains, could prevent any force of the enemy from advancing from Argos. These troops passed the night in the town, but were ordered to leave it early on the following day, to join Colocotroni,

who was already on the advance towards the enemy. They marched out in the highest spirits, uttering exclamations of contempt for the Turks, and confidence of victory.

Many of the women and children began now to return to their habitations, and the streets soon wore a more cheerful appearance: these families who were of good condition, however, still kept in their retreat in the mountains, resolving to wait till they should see what turn affairs were likely to take. To any reasonable calculation, it did not seem very probable that the small force of Greeks could long resist the fine army under Courschid, if he continued to advance in the same bold and fearless style he had hitherto done: but from this moment the operations of the Turks appeared paralysed, and success entirely forsook them.

In the midst of the confusion occasioned by these events, minor miseries were, for a time, forgotten or overlooked. The unfortunate Aga, Ali Cochi, of whom mention has been made, was taken from the place of his retreat by some of the Mainotes. They found the noble Turk



seated in his solitary chamber, and, after behaving to him with indignity, conveyed him to the house of one of the senators. It was understood that this was to be his last habitation, as some of the Greeks told me he would soon, most probably, be put to death privately; as he was known to have been an inveterate enemy to them, and to have used the greatest exertions in the defence of the town. The image of that wounded Turk, imprisoned and suffering, commending his son to our care, and blessing his wife and children, whom he never hoped to see again, has often followed me since amidst scenes of a far different character.

In the same house where the Aga had been confined, but in another part of it, lived three young Turks, quite retired: they were orphans, and of different parents. They often inquired with deep interest how the affairs of the war went on, and if there was any prospect of their being suffered to quit the country; a thing impossible to be achieved alone, as they would be sure to meet some of the stragglers from the army, or bands on the way to join it, who would

be disposed to show them little mercy. The last time we saw these three unfortunates, was on the morning after the first intelligence that the Turks were at hand, whose near approach, they knew, would only accelerate their own destruction. They stood together beneath the corridor of their house, and broke out, on our entrance, into loud and affecting lamentations; their looks were wild and agitated. Not knowing what to do, they had taken the extraordinary resolution, which despair only could prompt, of flying from the town on foot: the same evening, they quitted the town precipitately, to travel over the plain to the mountains, but never, it was believed, arrived there; as it was said, next day, they had been met in the way by some straggling soldiers, and put to death.

In a secluded part of the town, to which a long and narrow lane conducted, stood the palace of a Turkish general, who had been killed in the storm. Being invited one day to visit it, we followed the guide for some time, through this confined passage, and soon came to the door of the mansion. It was very spacious, and had

been splendidly furnished; the deserted apartments retained their rich gilding and ornaments, but the walls and floors were naked. We came at last to the harem;—the handsome divan had disappeared, as well as every trace of luxury. The apartment, which was large, was lighted by two rows of windows, which extended round three sides of the room. The upper row was of finely painted glass, and beneath each window were numerous sentences from the Koran, in large letters of gold, inculcating the finest precepts of morality. You then passed into a small and elegant saloon that looked out on the garden. The only ornament of the room was a painting of Constantinople on one of the walls, several feet long, in which mosques, and groves, ships, and mountains, were mingled together in admirable confusion. The garden, into which the apartment looked, was very large, and had been an excellent one, but at present was quite a wild, ruinous and neglected, with its flowers and rich foliage giving their shade and odours in vain. A fine fountain was in the middle; but it gushed idly away, amidst the fruit-trees,

that bent over it in the time of its owner's prosperity.

This mansion had been a luxurious residence; but the widow and her only child now dwelt in it alone,—to whom it was, indeed, as a desert. They were seated at the window, gazing on their desolate garden; not a footstep was heard in their numerous apartments, which had been all ravaged by the victor: they had chosen the most remote for their habitation. Their's was, indeed, a state of loneliness that pressed on the very soul: fearful of ever moving from the apartments into the open air; affrighted at every noise or sound of tumult that came from the distant streets; with the chambers of their former luxury and pride for ever before their eyes, where their husband and father's blood had been lately shed. Wherever they passed—into the ruined harem, the garden, or to the fountain's side—every spot and every scene only aggravated their distresses: these were their beloved retreats but a few months before, where the faces of friends and the sweet voices of affection met them. But to the widow and her child, no

friend was now left on earth, and their own home was become bitter to them.

We paid another visit to the plain and ruins of Mantinea. The latter, which consist almost entirely of the walls, are nearly circular, and are fortified, at intervals, with towers. There are seven or eight gates in these walls ; but no ruins of a temple, theatre, or other public building, are to be found. The situation is rather confined for a city of any considerable size, the plain being small, and inclosed on almost every side by lofty mountains. A small sluggish stream flows at the entrance of the plain.

It was now time to think of leaving Tripolizza. The last accounts from Colocotroni, whose force had now increased to nine thousand men, were encouraging.

In the mean time, an opportunity had occurred of rescuing the son and daughter of the Aga from their unfortunate situation, by conveying them to the nearest port, a journey of a day and half, and then procuring for them a passage to Constantinople, where they had many friends. The mother, who had resolved to re-

main, and share the fate of her husband, with her youngest children, from whom she could not part, was overjoyed at this : but when the horses to convey away her elder children were at the gate, and the way was open for their escape, the mother's feelings became too powerful, and she mourned and lamented over her daughter, as if she was doomed to be executed before her eyes. Her mind, enfeebled by continued misery, had not fortitude enough to bear the separation : indeed, this ill-fated family seemed to be destined never to know the slightest change of fortune. The finest feelings of the human heart were powerfully and passionately displayed by them ; and their devoted and faithful attachment to each other, and to their friends, (for whose distresses they felt as much as for their own,) could not be surpassed.

Having procured a passport, we now resolved on pursuing our journey ; and leaving Tripolizza and its various scenes of sorrow and misfortune behind us, bent our way, on a beautiful morning, over the plain to the north of the town.

The weather was calm and cloudless, as we wound our way between the mountains that encircle the plain of Tripolizza. As we looked back on it, it presented no longer the scene of alarm and distress which it had exhibited a few days before, covered with fugitives hurrying to the hills for shelter. It was now animated by various parties of Greek soldiers, each under their own banner, marching to fight for their country. These numerous detachments, who had left their occupations at home, and hastened from various parts of the Morea, at their general's summons, already augmented his army to nine thousand men. This force was now posted on the hills round the valley of Argos, in which the Turks had pitched their camp. The Ottoman general, Dramali, whose army consisted, in great part, of cavalry, had committed a great error, in choosing so confined a position, which was incessantly harassed and surrounded by the Greek infantry; who, by keeping up a fire of musketry, often brought down numbers of the enemy, with little loss to themselves. The Mainotes showed a good deal

of bravery in these attacks, in which they were generally foremost. Stimulated as much by the love of plunder as by patriotism, they were at once the friends and the enemies of Greece.

Amidst the trouble and confusion at Argos on the approach of the Turks, the whole of the town was burnt, and the flying inhabitants, instead of being defended by the Mainotes, were plundered by them without mercy. The booty thus treacherously acquired, was carried by these men to their native mountains; and their wives, like true descendants of the ancient Spartans, came to meet and congratulate them, urging their bandit-husbands to return again to the scene of action. These lawless people fared better in this war than the rest of the Greeks : perfectly secure in their fastnesses from the ravages of the invader, and undisturbed by intestine broils, they descended to the war, remained as long as they pleased, plundered friend and foe, and returned again to their mountain refuge.

Many Greek women, on their way to a place of security, found, too late, that the valuables



they had saved from the Turks, had become the prey of the Mainotes. The unfortunate Handivia, whose rich dresses and few remaining ornaments, saved amidst the storm, could not escape the rapacity of these unprincipled allies, was an instance of this. Her mountain abode was now in view. Lofty and distant from the scene of danger, yet almost overlooking the plain, it afforded a secure asylum: a long and narrow path led to it. It was a small Greek hamlet, situated on the craggy heights of the mountain, among which a few spots of verdure were intermingled. Some goats that browsed around, with bread, milk, and fowls, were the luxuries the place afforded. This retreat was rendered still more disagreeable by the number of Greek fugitives who had crowded to it, and who chiefly consisted of women and children, with some old men. But it was safe from the cavalry of the enemy, and that was all they sought: they could not hear from these solitudes the war-cry, the prelude to slaughter, that had often followed their steps. The cottages consisted, each of them, of a couple of apart-

ments, with windows of wooden frame-work, through which, when the fire was kindled in the middle of the floor, the smoke found its way, as well as through the place of entrance. This was an unfit asylum for a woman brought up in the lap of luxury, and accustomed to the various indulgences of a Turkish habitation of the better order. It was a mountain village of the rudest kind, destitute of every comfort: the rich Persian carpet of the harem was exchanged for the cold earth floor, and its coarse mat of reeds; and the bath, the surmeh for the eyelids, the elegant chibouque, and the rose-wood to burn in it—these enjoyments had no place here. Yet the Turkish beauty, vain even in the utmost misery, continued to disfigure her small and lovely hands with the red dye of the hennah, the only remains of her once splendid toilette. She inquired earnestly after the friends she had left behind in Tripolizza, and expressed the strongest interest in their fate. Her fine and colourless features had become yet more pale, and her look more languid and desponding. How could it be other-

wise, after having endured so many sorrows, and being now left to suffer them alone? The few remaining friends of her country, who took the least sympathy in her fate, she had little chance of beholding again. Every attention was paid to her situation, that circumstances admitted of, by some Greeks, who guarded the few Turkish fugitives; but no bribe could prevail on them to allow her departure for her own country,—that, to her, beloved land of Turkey, where her friends lived in affluence. Her tears flowed fast when we parted from her to pursue our journey. Every exertion to procure her liberty had been in vain. We speedily lost sight of that mountain retreat, but memory could not so soon banish the lot of the ill-fated Ottoman lady.

The path we were now pursuing afforded little beauty of scenery, being barren and rugged. In the evening, however, we entered a narrow and pleasant valley, where we encountered a band of Greek peasantry, marching in a very disorderly manner, with several flags, to join the army. They stopped and questioned

us, and then passed on; but in the rear, and the last of the band, came, most despondingly, a Greek priest, whom these fellows had compelled to go with them, with the threat of cutting off his head if he refused. He bore a large sabre at his girdle, and complained bitterly of being compelled to go to war against his will.

We soon after ascended a hill, on which, about half way up, was a small village, the only resting-place for the night within view. As the chief man of the place, however, was very inhospitable, and abused us as infidels, we made our couch beneath a large spreading tree. We awoke almost with the first light of day the next morning, and pursued our way over the mountains. In the course of a few hours, we met several detachments of Greeks, coming from the scene of action; they had been severely handled by the Turks, and some of them were wounded.

It was evening when we arrived at a small Greek hamlet in the middle of a narrow valley. The owner of a cottage gave us a kind welcome, and though his stock of provisions was small,

he killed a kid for our supper. My servant, in a couple of hours, produced this kid, dressed in two or three different ways, with soup, for our repast, which we took in the open air, in front of the cottage. The bottom of the valley was fertilized by a rapid stream, and its sides were partially cultivated, and several habitations were scattered around. The harvest was now gathering in, and the reapers were busy in many of the fields we had passed in the day's journey. It was a joyous time to the peasantry, several of whom assembled round us as we drank our cup of coffee after the meal; and they were very inquisitive about the events of the war. The weather was so fine and sultry, that we would not avail ourselves of the shelter of the cottage, but, making use of some of the sheaves of corn which lay thickly around, for a couch, reposed soundly in the open air, in a purer atmosphere than the interior of the dwelling possessed; for the abode of the Greek peasant is not always a tempting one.

The next morning we pursued our way along the banks of the stream; the valley, after a

couple of hours, began to open, and led to the foot of some very lofty hills, or rather mountains. The ascent of these was tedious and winding, and through a forest of trees: a spring of water that gushed out amidst the rocks on the path side, was now and then a welcome sight; but when we gained the summit, a very clear and extensive view opened beneath. In the gradual descent from these lofty eminences, the plain in front extended far and beautifully, and as it was now mid-day, we halted for two or three hours in the shade of some trees, near which was a large fountain of excellent water. In the dearth of rivers and streams in Greece, which certainly impairs its picturesque beauty, the numerous springs of cool and delicious water are a delightful resource. These fountains often stand by the way-side, and are built of fine stone, at others they are sunk deep in the earth, and the water in these is of course the coolest. The want of wine in the Morea at this period was annoying to a traveller; what was generally produced as that beverage, was of a white colour, and tasted so strong of a plant steeped in it,

of which the Greeks are fond, that it was impossible to drink it.

The air being now cooler, we pursued our course through a rich country, the soil of which would most abundantly repay the care of the cultivator; but the habitations were very few, and the cultivation only visible at long intervals.

After a fatiguing day's journey, we halted for the night at a solitary abode; it stood on a gentle and verdant eminence, and was surrounded by the rude yet richly productive gardens of its owner, whose wife and daughters, as well as himself, received us with great civility, and assured us of a lodging within their walls—but their larder was quite empty. The long hair of these females floated in braided tresses down their backs; their complexion was rather dark, and their eyes perfectly so, but their manners were lively and attentive. As the evening was a very lovely one, we chose again to repose out of doors, with the sky for our canopy. In defect of more substantial materials, we supped on some tea—an article that

a traveller in these climates ought never to be without. The setting of the sun on the romantic Grecian scenery was very magnificent—the light lingered long on the summits of the mountains, which were not barren and rocky as those of more eastern climes, but verdant to the very summit, and covered in many parts with numerous flocks, which found, in the wild heath and innumerable mountain shrubs, a rich and excellent pasture. The scenery of Greece, less rich and elegant than that of Italy, is of a bolder character, and full of a wild beauty that never wearies the beholder.

We walked for some time at the foot of the eminence on which the cottage stood, and tasted to the full the tranquillity and splendour of the hour and the scene. No church bell sounded a deep note, or rung out a gay and cheerful peal, as we had often heard in Catholic countries in the stillness of the evening,—no muezzin's call came from the summit of the minaret, solemn and warning as an angel's voice, to summon the people from cottage and village to prayers,—but all was hushed, and not a human



voice or step was heard. The path of the war came not here, the ravages of the Turks were unfelt, and the plundering bands of native soldiery bent their course at a distance.

Returning to our rude place of repose, we wrapped ourselves in our cloaks, and did not awake till some time after daylight the next morning. Bidding adieu to our kind hosts, we advanced over the small plain in front, and found, as we drew nearer the sea, that the habitations began to thicken. No people in the world would live more happily than the Greek peasantry, if freed from the presence of their oppressors; they have the comforts of life in abundance—poultry, eggs, bread, and milk, with flocks of sheep—their manners are very civil, and their spirits gay and animated. In fact, they are the only estimable or deserving part of the population. The expenses of a traveller, except in the point of horses, are trifling; but his accommodations are not always to be envied, especially at this time, when the struggle for liberty threw the whole country into confusion and alarm.

At mid-day the weather was very sultry : we passed by several villages, and determined to rest for a few hours at the last of these, to avoid the oppressive heat. We entered a spacious court, in the middle of which was a fountain, and, alighting from our horses, were received with great kindness and many professions by the good priest, who was the owner of the mansion, and the pastor of the village. As he knew he should lose nothing by his hospitality, he took care to exercise it to the utmost, and in about an hour, with the help of his wife, placed an excellent repast before us in one of the apartments. He would not partake of the fare he had provided, but stood before us, while we ate, in his long priestly dress, and smiling courteous countenance. His black robe or cloak hung down to his heels, and his high cap gave to his short figure a tolerable size. His hand was placed on his breast occasionally, and his looks evinced the utmost pleasure when we could not help commending his good things ; and when we had finished, he sat down and dispatched, with

considerable gout, a good portion of his own fowls, eggs, and other articles.

After a few hours' stay, we took leave of this courteous pastor, whose situation his brethren of the See of Rome might well envy, as he had wife and children, mansion and glebe, and a well stocked yard, and a contented heart, to all appearance. Towards evening we came in view of the sea; but it was dark ere we arrived at it. Lights were visible, however, in a detached building on the shore, used by the Greeks as a wine-house, and which, with a few wretched scattered cottages at a short distance, was called Claranza. We entered the first of its dwellings—a long, lofty, and dirty apartment, that was filled, even at this hour, with wandering Greeks, and refugees from the Ionian isles. With some difficulty we procured a lodging, for this place was a kind of auberge: in a short time, however, these disagreeable guests dropped off, one after the other, and we were left undisturbed. The murmur of the waters without was a welcome sound; in a few hours we should leave

this land of confusion and treachery, where we had been exposed to so many dangers, and the idea made us very contented with the wretched accommodations of the place.

The next day we strove to find some amusement in the few resources the place afforded, being obliged to wait here till a passage could be procured to the island of Zante. About a hundred yards from the house was a large garden, with several fine trees in it, and a quantity of excellent melons and vegetables. The cultivator was a Zanteote, who had fled from the island a few months before, to avoid the consequences of some rebellious proceedings he had engaged in, and he had taken refuge in this spot. Many others of his countrymen were in the same predicament, and also dwelt in the neighbourhood. We sat in this man's garden, in the shade of the trees, and eat some of his melons, and drank the wretched wine of the auberge, and read and talked, to while the time away. But this Zanteote was a great wretch; he had brought his wife with him, with whom he lived in a cottage in his garden. She was

an amiable little woman, of dark complexion, spoke Italian very well, and talked a great deal about the English in Zante, and deplored bitterly that they were obliged to quit the island and come to such a barbarous spot, where they were deprived of every comfort.

In the evening a number of stragglers filled the house; a set of lawless fellows, each well armed, who seemed prepared for every violence, and loved plunder, yet did not dare to join their fellow-countrymen in the war, and fight for the liberties of Greece. The rascally Zanteote proved himself a Greek of the true breed: we had made him a present of some coffee and sugar, luxuries not to be found here, and he repaid it by stealing a pair of pistols from my servant, who, having drank too much wine, had fallen asleep. But amidst such an assemblage of outcasts and robbers, it was difficult to prove the theft, and after a violent altercation, we were obliged to submit to it in silence. On the following evening, however, having procured a boat, we set out on the passage to Zante.

The night was calm, and there being little

wind, the boat made a slow progress, and it was not till the ensuing forenoon that we arrived at the island. Its cliffs and wooded eminences looked very attractive as we drew near, and we entered the harbour or basin, that was crowded with shipping. It was not till the following day that we were allowed to disembark, and proceed to the lazaretto. It was a sad alternative. Miserable and full of woe to the unhappy traveller is that hour when he has to expiate his wanderings within the walls of a lazaretto, above all, in that of Zante! All perils by land or water, in wilderness or by robbers, were light and welcome in comparison of the overflowing and hourly annoyances of this dreary place of ordeal. We were admitted at first into a large court, surrounded with high walls, and then, ascending a flight of steps, whence abominable odours assailed us, we passed through a long passage to the apartment allotted for our residence. The building was at this time full, and the apartments of a better order being all occupied, we were unable to procure one, and were obliged

to remain contented with this infamous lodging. Wretched as it was, it was not all our own; for two Greeks were stationed on the opposite side. The apartment was about twelve feet square, with a stone floor, and two large open window places: frames and glass might once have been there, but they had utterly disappeared; and the large door-way also had no door, so that the air found free passage through these open spaces. Our mattresses being laid on the floor, and baggage deposited, we became the tenants, for thirty days and nights, of this miserable chamber.

This was an extravagant period, and one which they had no right to enforce; twenty-one days being the utmost duration of the quarantine on coming from Greece; but there happened unfortunately to be a malignant fever in some part of the north of that country, to which we never approached within a hundred miles; yet, on account of this remote fever, nine days were added to the usual term. It was in vain we supplicated for a curtailment of the period; the physician-general came in person to

assure us, with some expressions of sympathy, that it was impossible to take off two hours from the month's imprisonment.

We were obliged, then, to struggle to keep up our spirits, and enliven the slow and solitary hours. By good fortune the weather was always lovely; the sunbeams found their way in the morning into this desolate chamber, and the night-winds, which swept over us as we slept, were never cold. The moon and starlight nights were excessively brilliant, and though the earth afforded us but a confined scene, many lonely hours were consumed in gazing on

“ ———— those orbs of light,  
So wildly, spiritually bright.”

In the spacious court beneath were confined a number of people, who took their meals, and danced and sung, and slept in the open air; they displayed a true Greek vivacity and recklessness. But many, more unfortunate, were ill; for the air beneath was close and unwholesome, and their lodging was the small Greek church that opened into the court: a surgeon visited them every day,



and here a few of them breathed their last ! Their appearance was melancholy and distressing : after long absence from their homes and families, they were confined here for a month or more on their return.

But the Greek church was a most useful building ; it served as a lodging and abode for the sick and the healthy. At meal-time the Greeks were seen eating their meals on the benches about the altar, or on other sacred places, and singing and smoking ; but the moment the padre came to preach them a sermon, all was reverence ; the whole multitude rushed into the little chapel, that was soon crowded in every part, to listen to the good father's eloquence. Our two fellow-prisoners were Greeks : one was a merchant, who had sustained heavy losses in consequence of the war ; three houses which he possessed at Patras, with all they contained, were entirely lost to him ; yet he did not appear to despond or mourn over his reverses, but took his meals and drank his Greek wine twice a day with great cheerfulness. His companion was a different character : he was about

sixty years of age ; had lived a gay life, according to his own account, and had been very happy ; but now, never were the consequences of a profligate youth, and the premature infirmities of age, more bitterly bewailed than by this Greek. He longed for the days of his youth again, and lamented that the world offered him now so little that he could enjoy. He had money and relations, but no home, or wife, or child, and he bore the confinement better than any of us ; for what prospect had his release in reserve for him ?

The windows of our domain commanded a view, over a low wall, of another large court or division of the lazaretto. Sheds, supported by light pillars only, were erected in this court, and in front they were quite open. In one of these sheds was a Moreote Greek, with his wife. She was one of the unfortunate Sciotes who had fled her native island ; and, being a young girl of about fourteen years of age, rather pretty, and wandering friendless and desolate ; had met with this Greek, who was four times her own age, and had married him to have a home and

a place of refuge. This fellow's delight every morning, soon after the sun rose, was to dress his young wife's hair, and braid its tresses ; and every evening they sang the island songs together in a very pleasing manner, for she had a sweet and plaintive voice.

The only indulgence granted us was to quit our confinement in the morning to bathe for half an hour. Short as the interval of liberty was, we looked forward to it with exquisite pleasure ; and heard about nine o'clock the door at the end of the long passage unlocked ; we then descended the steps, and came to the shore, which was close at hand, and gazed on the waters, the high and wooded cliffs, and the numerous vessels, as on a spectacle that was measured out to us for a moment, and was soon to be withdrawn.

All comforts, however, were not withheld ;—provisions of various kinds, fruits, and even wine could be procured daily from the market, and were brought by a man who attended for this purpose : the wine was good ; and, with an odd volume of Lord Byron's poetry, formed

our chief consolation. The two Greeks sate apart ; each had his own selfish and solitary repast ; and when the hour came, seated on the floor, each took his flask of wine, crossed himself several times, muttered a few sentences of prayer, and then discussed his meal in perfect silence.

Before sunrise every morning, the loud and cheerful songs of the peasantry of the island were heard beneath the window, as, on horseback or on foot, they carried their fruits and vegetables to the market ; and in the cool of the evening they passed again on the way homewards, often accompanied by their wives and daughters. We often gazed with envy on these happy and cheerful groups, and could have consented to become a tiller of the ground for a time, for the sake of liberty.

In a chamber adjoining ours was lodged an elderly Greek, who had travelled a good deal, and bore his imprisonment with great impatience ; his young wife, with her only child, came sometimes into the garden beneath the window, smartly dressed in a straw bonnet, and

clothes of gaudy colours, and conveyed to him fruits of different kinds, by means of a cord let down from above. This man marked the passage of each day in black lines on the wall, and often counted the number that remained; and his features still grew brighter as he added every morning a fresh mark to the list.

But the days, after all, wore away, and the month ended at last, and with it all our miseries. It was a calm and lovely morning when we were freed from this execrable lazaretto, (a disgrace to the English Government,) and bent our steps along the beach towards the town. How delicious to the sense and soul were the scenes of rich verdure, and trees, and white cottages, and their gardens, which met our view! We entered the long street that conducted into the town, which is well and neatly built. The market being held in the early part of the day, made the street at this time rather a bustling scene. Grapes of every size and colour were displayed for sale, at a very cheap rate, freshly gathered,—with a quantity of other fruits. We took up our quarters in the hotel,

a pretty good one for Zante. The weather was constantly cloudless and serene, it being the month of July, and our residence in this island, of a few weeks, was passed very agreeably. We dined occasionally at the house of Dr. T. the physician of this isle, as well as of Cephalonia, and Ithaca. After wandering so long among Arabs, Syrians, and Greeks, it was a welcome event to sit down at a hospitable board spread in the English fashion, and to listen in the evening to Scotch and Irish melodies on the piano, accompanied by a sweet voice in our native tongue.

The walk along the shore was very romantic to the left of the town, and extended a great way inland; leading sometimes beneath the high and wooded cliffs, on the summit of which were a few country houses of the richer inhabitants. We paid a visit to one of these on a fine but sultry afternoon, and, ascending a winding road above the town, entered into the interior of the island. The scenery was rich and pleasing, but not bold or magnificent, and very inferior to that of the Greek isles of the Archi-

pelago. A considerable part of the ground was cultivated in vineyards; but the wine of Zante is not good;—that of Cephalonia is excellent. This island rose now full in our view, consisting throughout of high mountains, that had at some distance a barren aspect. It was separated from Zante by a wide strait, several leagues across; but its soil is admirably calculated for the cultivation of the vine, in whose produce is almost the sole trade and export of the isle.

After a pleasant walk, we arrived at the country house of the Zanteote: he was absent; but his wife, who expected our arrival, gave us a very polite reception. She was an Englishwoman, who had been some years married to this Greek, and appeared in a state of much comfort and competence. Her manners were not in the slightest degree affected by those of the people among whom she lived, but she was the gentle, pleasing, thorough Englishwoman. We sat beneath the corridor by the fountain's side, enjoying the coolness it gave, and afterwards strolled in the vineyards, wherein rich and

long clusters of different kinds of grapes hung ripe and tempting on every side. We could not join in the frequent observation of travellers, that no grapes have so fine a flavour as those raised in England ; in Egypt and throughout the Greek isles, the grapes are more delicious than our hot-beds can make them ;—although we never ate peaches, even in the most favoured climes, equal in flavour to those of our own land, or oranges as good as are sold there. We then adjourned to the dwelling to take coffee, accompanied by various cakes and fruits and wine :—but the Englishwoman, amidst all the charms of climate and scenery, had not forgot her own country ; she spoke of it with strong and ardent attachment, and longed to return to it, and to its beloved customs and habits. In fact, we never met with a countrywoman in any distant climate, of Turkey or Syria, but who expressed the same desires and regrets, and was dissatisfied with her condition in a foreign land. We had met with a young Italian lady, settled at Beirout, at the foot of Mount Lebanon. She was ac-



complished, well born, and a native of the delicious neighbourhood of Florence. She had arrived only about a year before; but her spirits were gay, and her conversation full of animation: she was perfectly pleased with her situation, and spoke of Italy with enthusiasm, as the first and loveliest country in the world, but spoke of it, not with regret or melancholy, not as a land she sighed for, but feared never to behold again,—for she was resolved to be happy where she was, and to make the most of the scanty resources around her.

The sun had set ere we returned to the town, at a few miles' distance, and the air was delightfully cool: we met parties of peasants in their light and rather graceful costume, returning from their labours, and singing gaily as they went along. Yet the character of the Zanteotes is far from favourable; they labour under the reputation of being treacherous and dishonest; and, like the rest of their countrymen, are fickle to excess. The beauty of the women of the isle exists only in imagination: they are in general a plain race, with a dark

complexion, and figures the reverse of *embon-point*; and when they are endowed with personal charms, they fade early and rapidly, either from neglect of their persons, or from the climate. Indeed, few things can be less tempting or dangerous than a Greek woman of the age of thirty; and the custom of never confining, or even guarding the bosom, does not heighten the power of their attraction. Several Englishmen, however, have married Greek women, both at Zante and Corfu, but with their hands generally came a pretty good portion of land or cash. The almost total want of education makes them but tedious and sorry companions, and a few days or weeks' society is sufficient to exhaust their slender stock of information and interest.

An unfortunate young German, whom we met with here, excited our sympathy and pity. He had come, some months before, to combat for the liberties of Greece: he was an officer in the Grecian army, and had been wounded in one of the actions: unable to act, and without money or friends, he had hoped to find pity

and assistance from the Greeks; but they treated him with utter neglect, did not relieve or support him, and with a heart full of indignation, and friendless and deserted, he had reached Zante, where he was now suffering from his wound, without funds to return to his native country, though this was now his only desire.

After residing a fortnight in Zante, I took passage on board a large vessel about to sail for England, and parted from my faithful and excellent servant, who returned to Constantinople. A voyage of seven weeks, with the usual vicissitudes of wind and weather, brought us to our native shore.



## APPENDIX.



## APPENDIX.

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### VISIT TO PALMYRA.

COMMUNICATED BY A FRIEND OF THE AUTHOR.

WE had often earnestly wished to visit Palmyra; and the difficulties which at first stood in the way being now in a good measure removed, we resolved to undertake the journey.

We made inquiry for an Arab sheik, both as a conductor and guardian; for these shieks, who are connected perhaps with one or two more tribes besides their own, assure you of receiving no molestation on the journey: but they are apt to promise more than the event fulfils. This Arab demanded a thousand piastres for conducting us, and talked a good deal of the probable dangers of the way, and the importance his guidance would be to us. There had been lately some dis-

putes between the Pacha of Damascus and one or two of the Arab tribes of the Desert, several of whose chiefs he had severely punished ; and a traveller might chance to fall in with some of their followers, who would not, perhaps, give him the best reception.

About an hour before sunrise we left Damascus, and proceeded over the plain in the direction of the mountain Ashloón. The path was delightful, as it led over the streams, and through the forest of gardens which extend for many miles round the city. The numerous minarets of the latter now glittered in the rising sun, particularly those of the grand mosque, which are conspicuous from almost every point of view. No where in the East is the stranger so forcibly reminded of European scenery as around Damascus. The constant flow of waters through the gardens and woods, and the fresh and living green in which they are clothed ; are peculiar features in so hot a climate.

In the course of a few hours we quitted the circuit of the groves and numerous villages, and entered on the wide and open plain. Our company consisted of two Bedouins to take care of six camels, and the baggage, ourselves, one servant, three horses, and the guide. We travelled no faster than the usual caravan pace ; about three or four miles an hour. Turning in a short time to the left, we lost sight of the city and its delicious plain, and beheld the Desert opening before us.

The prophets of Israel describe the Desert as a dread and fearful residence in all their allusions to it ; and in their predictions of future judgments on their countrymen, threaten them with that "howling wilderness, that waste and weary land, not inhabited," as one of



the heaviest calamities. The traditions of the forty years' sojourn there was, probably, one cause of this. But the Prophet of Mecca has forborne such descriptions, knowing, perhaps, Arab as he was, that the wilds had their charms, and that his people loved them.

The soil over which we travelled was barren; here and there a cottage was seen. The verdure had not yet wholly left us, but continued to intersect the way, in small patches of olive and other trees.

The sun, as it drew towards mid-day, was very powerful, and we were obliged to have recourse to umbrellas as a shelter from the heat. There was no place that offered any tolerable accommodation till we should arrive at Carieteen, at the end of two days; but we were better provided with necessaries than on some of our former journeys. The path too, was entirely different. In the Arabian deserts it was always of soft or hard sand, where a camel only could travel; here it was a firm road, covered sometimes with a coarse verdure, on which our horses travelled perfectly well. Achmed, the guide, was a spirited and shrewd fellow, very willing to converse, especially about the consequence of his tribe, and its great possessions. Greedy of money as the Arabs always are, it was evident that the prospect of the thousand piastres promised him was very agreeable; and although these people are very hospitable when their generosity is appealed to, it is always much easier to drive a bargain with a Turk than an Arab, who will grasp at the last para.

Soon after mid-day we alighted to rest beneath a small group of trees, that afforded a scanty shade. We had some cold provisions from the city; and, with

the aid of some very excellent and strong white wine of Lebanon, presented by the fathers of the Spanish convent, made a tolerable dinner. The scene was wild, and spread to a great extent around us; the beautiful mountain of Ashloon intercepting the view to the left.

In about two hours we set out again, and after travelling till nearly dark, we halted and pitched our tent by a spring of water. The night proved extremely cold. In spite of the tent and our garments, we felt quite chilled with the keenness of the air, and found a good fire and a cup of coffee very grateful early the next morning, before our departure. This day we passed two or three villages, and had not advanced far when we beheld the plain before us covered with an immense multitude of Arabs, with their flocks and camels. They had come from plains far distant—from the extensive tracts which extend towards Babylon and Bagdad, the pastures being either scanty or else partially exhausted this season. They had journeyed hither, with all their flocks and herds, for the sake of the superior pasturage the Syrian plains afford. Their tents were spread over an immense space of ground before us; those of the sheiks being distinguished by their superior size. Groups of camels were standing in some parts, and groups of their masters beside them; and herds of cattle, goats, and horses, were dispersed over all the plain, mingled with parties of Arabs, who watched and attended them.

We could not avoid passing through the midst of this large encampment, and its numerous population. Some of the Arabs were very civil, and did not offer the least molestation or insult; others looked suspicious and angry, as if they would like well to plunder us. They

invited us more than once to stop and take some refreshment ; but as in that case we should have been soon surrounded by curious and observing groups, we declined the invitation, and passed on. It was some time before we disengaged ourselves from the numerous scattered detachments of this singular people, who seemed to live in perfect amity with each other, and to respect inviolably individual property, however exposed and intermingled.

Their dress was the same as that of the Arabs we had seen in Damascus ; and their persons were middle-sized, often tall, but spare, and well-proportioned. Their flocks were numerous enough to afford them the substantial luxuries of the table ; and many of their tents appeared well furnished in the Eastern style.

We travelled on without halting, and with little variety in the way, till we arrived at Carieteen, a large village. The sheik, our guide, ordered a small sheep to be killed, and dressed for our supper. We were accommodated in one of the houses of the village for the night ; and, a large fire being kindled on the floor, we seated ourselves sociably around it, with our conductor and the host of the mansion. A few of the inhabitants of the village made their appearance after the repast. We had still a couple of bottles of the strong convent-wine left, and the sheik and the host seemed to gaze on the forbidden draught with desiring eyes, yet dared not then, at least before witnesses, break the Prophet's command, though it did not appear from their manner to have been always a stranger to their lips. No men drink it with more heartfelt, yet outwardly subdued feeling, than very many of the faithful ; who agree, no

doubt, in the opinion of Wortley Montague, after he had embraced their faith, that the Turkish life wanted only one thing to make it perfectly happy—the permission to drink good wine.

Our resting-place this night, was much more comfortable than on the preceding, as we were fenced from the keen air. We left Carieteen the next morning, and advanced into a barren and sandy region, with neither tree nor shade, and not a salutary spring to afford relief. We were obliged to provide ourselves with a plentiful stock of water on leaving the village. The weather was very sultry, and the scene afforded nothing interesting to amuse the attention. No deep and secluded glens, the towering sides of which shut out the piercing sunbeams; no magnificent mountains, or hallowed regions, as the path to Mount Sinai perpetually displayed; but a waste and level plain, lined on each side, at the distance of many miles, by barren, low, and miserable hills.

We were obliged to have frequent recourse to our water-skins: for the thirst occasioned by the heat was extreme. The two Bedouins, fatigued with walking on the hot sand, at times mounted the camels. My companion bore the journey with uncommon cheerfulness and gaiety; for he had long had a passionate desire to see Palmyra, the only great ruin in the world, he said, that he had not visited. With joy we beheld the sun declining in the west, and felt the sultry heat succeeded by the cool breeze of the evening. In two or three hours we halted in the middle of the plain, being too fatigued to travel any farther. The fire soon blazed on the sand, and the cup of coffee and the pipe were quickly prepared. It is not on the rich carpet or in the splendid

kiosque that these simple luxuries are most exquisitely enjoyed. Who that has ever tasted them after a day of burning heat and wasting fatigue, seated on the desert sand, but will say, they were sweeter to him there than when presented by the hand of beauty, or in the palaces of kings?

It soon became dark, as far as darkness can be in this climate; for the star-light was uncommonly fine. The tent was pitched, yet we continued seated round our cheerful fire; for the air already began to be very cool. The night on the Desert, especially so calm and hushed a one as this, is peculiarly solemn and impressive: no sound to break on the stillness! no falling of waters or murmuring of groves, or voice of living thing!

The Bedouins, after their frugal supper, had wrapped themselves in their cloaks, and sought repose on the sand, beside their camels. We were obliged ere long to quit the open air for a more agreeable abode, and take refuge in the tent. The climate of this country is much more severe during the night than in the deserts of Paran and Sinai; and the vicissitude from the sultry heats of the day to the piercing colds is too strong for any constitution save that of an Arab; and verifies the words of the patriarch Jacob to his father-in-law, who dwelt in this very land — “that in the day the drought consumed him, and the frost by night;” and this is the case, more or less, through all parts of the year.

On the following morning we hastened our departure; for this was said to be the most dangerous part of the road, and there was no water to be had till our arrival at the ruins. The aspect of the country was the same

as on the preceding day, the range of naked hills bounding the plain on each side. Not a single passenger appeared to enliven the scene, which was rather stupid and monotonous ; and we halted again at night in the plain, with no small pleasure ; for the tiresome pace of three miles an hour is inexpressibly annoying.

The next day we quitted our encampment in higher spirits, knowing that a few hours would bring us in view of the celebrated ruin we had so long ardently desired to see. The plain became much narrower as we advanced, and the hills on each side drew close together, and we entered a small valley ; on arriving at the end of which, a plain in front all at once unfolded itself ; and we had a distinct and full view of the glorious ruins with which it is covered. Like the first view of Damascus, this spectacle struck us the more as it burst suddenly on the sight after dreariness and disgust. On advancing a little farther, some of the Palmyrene Arabs came to meet us ; and, after a civil salutation, conducted us to the habitation of the great sheik. This man, with his followers, had made themselves habitations in a part of the great temple or palace ; and they were much better lodged than in their own rude tents, or ruder cottages. The sheik ordered coffee and a pipe, and gave us an abode of the same kind as his own, in a portion of the ruins. These wild and lawless fellows, herding amidst the most magnificent ruins in the world, and looking on themselves as the guardians of them, present, with their picturesque dress and arms, a fine and forcible contrast to the scene around, entirely in keeping.

As soon as our effects were deposited in our new

habitation, and we had got rid of the Arabs for the time, we began to explore and walk about these immense remains. This is, indeed, a work of some time, on account of the great extent of ground they cover, and the various fine detached portions, unconnected now with any building, which every where meet the view :— a few pillars, standing in loneliness, the last of some gorgeous structure that is heaped in masses at their feet—a noble gateway, with the wreck of its rich ornaments, opening the way to ruin only and destruction—with tenantless tombs crowding on each other,—are the characteristics of this splendid solitude.

In this respect they have more resemblance to the ruins of Thebes in Upper Egypt, than any other ; but surpass them greatly in regularity and beauty, though not in greatness ; as the Corinthian and Ionic capitals of these long colonnades are more agreeable to the eye than the gigantic and unadorned columns of Carnac :— the grey marble of which they are composed adds to their elegance ; though this, by exposure to the weather, is often covered with a reddish hue.

The first evening we passed here was a very delightful one, and the setting of the sun on the ruins of the great temple was a noble and almost a melancholy scene. Being destitute of provision, we purchased a goat of the Arabs, who keep a herd of them here ; and our evening repast was served up in our new abode—our cottage amidst the wrecks of palaces.

The next day we continued to view the ruins with unabated interest. It is difficult to estimate the entire space they cover ; but the circumference may be about three miles,—rather more than that of the modern city

of Jerusalem. The whole of this area may be said to be covered with numerous rows of columns, courts, arches, scattered pillars, and innumerable fragments of marble which strew the ground. Of this the great temple occupies the largest space; the columns, however, which compose it, are by no means lofty, being between thirty and forty feet in height; and they are slender in comparison with other Oriental ruins, the circumference not exceeding eight feet. These columns are in part fluted, and in part plain. The capitals of the temple are all Corinthian; but the beauty of these is almost entirely defaced by time and the mutilating hands of the Arabs;—the foliage and ornaments of the capitals are often entirely stripped and destroyed. A few of the columns, of the Ionic order, have their capitals better preserved. The effect of the superb colonnades in the great portico, is considerably injured by a projection from the shaft of the pillars, at little more than a third of their height, on which statues, perhaps, formerly stood. The finest view of the temple is from without the arch, where its long flights of columns are seen in beautiful perspective, mingled with porticoes and sepulchres. It would make the finest panorama in the world.

The decorations of the archway, which, by the portion that remains, appear to have been very minute and rich, are greatly defaced. Although the diameter of the pillars is in general from two to three feet, the height of some of them amounts to forty feet; and a small row approaches near fifty, and many others do not exceed twenty-six feet. None of them, in beauty, size, or preservation, equal the noble columns which compose



the portico of the temple of Balbec, which we afterwards beheld. The entablatures, and part of their ornaments, still remain on many of the flights of pillars ; but among the innumerable fragments of every kind scattered over the ground, no fragments of statues are discoverable, and of the great number that formerly stood in the temple not a trace remains.

If the site of these remains is the same as that formerly occupied by the city built by Solomon, called Tadmor in the wilderness, which is tacitly believed, it is extraordinary how that monarch could have founded a city in so remote a situation—the only very distant one he is ever said to have erected. The city of Damascus must have been in his possession at the time, or he could not have built a city five or six days' journey beyond it ;—and only a few years afterwards, it is said, that “ Rezon was an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon ; and he dwelt in Damascus, and reigned over Syria.” It was, perhaps, some other spot, and nearer to Judea, that contained the city called “ Tadmor in the wilderness.” The Bedouins, however, universally call it Thedmor ; and the tribe that resides here confidently believe that this was the city founded by Solomon the great king.

The hills round the ruins were probably covered in former times with palm-trees, as those around the capital of Palestine, but at present not one is to be seen ; some olive-trees, growing amidst the fallen fragments, have a very romantic appearance, and afford a relief to the scene. The sepulchral monuments scattered about, are very numerous ; some of these are in ruins, others, more entire, are of considerable size and altitude, con-

sisting of several stories and chambers, and displaying a grandeur of architecture, that brought to mind the tombs of ancient Thebes. Formerly a great number of mummies were found here : but the Arabs, as in Egypt, destroyed them for the purpose of getting at the composition with which they were embalmed. Fragments of mummies, and pieces of the cloth used in embalming, may now be discovered in these sepulchres ; but nothing to repay the curious search : though in a few are evidently places where funeral urns have been deposited ; and some sarcophagi yet remain, but empty. A late traveller has said, he discovered a hand, entire and well preserved, in one of these deserted chambers of the dead. They extend to some distance without the walls, even to the small valley by which we entered the plain, and prove the passion these people had for magnificent mausoleums. A few are built in the form of a tower, and have actually been employed by the Turks for that purpose ; others are adorned with a portico ; and the tombs are placed within in front of this, or in the sides ; some, more simple, are entered by a small door, with a half column on each side, and a few steps in front. They are all built of marble, and are paved with the same material, and have had the same fate as those of the kings of Thebes, cut into the bowels of the mountain, or of Judea, hewn out of the precipitous rocks ; remaining almost entire, while the ashes they contained have long been scattered to the winds.

The hill on which the castle stands commands a complete view of the city and the plain beneath. The ancient city in its glory, with its woods and streams, must have resembled an island embosomed in the

ocean ; for on every side a vast extent of desert opens ; the same, no doubt, as it existed then, in which you find no water, no shade or verdure, till you arrive in the plain of Palmyra, where you find plenty of water issuing from the very rocks. The castle is of the rudest style of architecture, of a date very subsequent to the buildings beneath, and is probably a work of the Saracens. The adjoining hills are crowned with buildings of a more ancient and venerable aspect, being the monuments of the Palmyrenes, who made the highest summits, as well as the valleys, abodes of their dead.

A few miles distant from the city is what is called the Valley of Salt, said to be the place where "David got him a name by smiting the Syrians in the Valley of Salt." This circumstance shows how little the features of the surrounding country are altered since his time ; for Damascus, besides other places, procures salt at present from this spot. The ground here has a very barren appearance, is impregnated with salt to some depth below the surface, but it is chiefly after showers of rain that the Arabs collect it, as in common salt-pits : a quantity of salt being found lodged on the surface after the moisture has evaporated.

One of the most singular objects in the plain is the sulphureous water, which is found in several places. At the base of a rocky mountain is the finest of these springs, which gushes out into a clear pool, and runs to some distance over the plain, where it is lost in the sand. The water is very warm, and is said to be useful in some complaints, the Arabs having a good opinion of its virtues. There are one or two more springs of the same water, but not so large in quantity as the

first. At the foot of a high rock near the Red Sea, are four or five springs of a perfectly similar description, but hotter, and known only to the Arabs, with whom we had visited them, who drink of them whenever they pass the spot, for their medicinal virtues. They gush out of the rock on the sand, and, having formed one or two pools, flow by a small channel into the sea.

In the evening we returned again to our Arab habitation, which, though not very spacious, was much cleaner than one of their tents. Our supper consisted of the same delicacy as the preceding day, goat's-flesh being the only food to be procured. As the evening was a beautiful one, we chose to take our meal in the open air. We had the foresight to bring a small quantity of brandy from Damascus, which with water was a very wholesome substitute for the wines of Lebanon. The Bedouins, who gathered round us, did not decline to partake very cordially of the brandy, which is a liquor not forbidden; strange that the Prophet should have indulged them in ardent spirits, and denied them juice of the grape!

The tribe settled here, under the great sheik, was not a very numerous one. He was a middle-aged man, not over civil in his manners, and proud of his dignity, particularly of the privilege he possessed of conducting the Pacha of Damascus to Mecca, when he went on his pilgrimage. This sheik was an imposing and rapacious man, and grasped at all he could get from the Giaours, as we soon had occasion to experience.

The Palmyrene women deserve the praise given to their beauty throughout the East; they are the finest-looking women of all the Arab tribes of Syria; their

complexion is not very dark, and many of them have the fine and florid colour of more northern climates. Their manners are not so rigid as those of some of the tribes, who would not pass the tent of a Frank without scrupulously concealing their features, even in the heart of the Desert. The Palmyrene women possess a cheerful and lively disposition; and though the veil is always worn, it does not very strictly perform its office. They are well and rather slightly made, as the life in the Desert is always a foe to *embonpoint*; but their arms and hands are beautifully formed, and their features regular. Like other Orientals of their sex, they dye the tips of the fingers and the palms of the hands red, and wear gold rings in their ears; and the jet-black dye of the hennah for the eye-lashes is never forgotten; they imagine, and perhaps with truth, that its blackness gives the eye an additional languor and interest.

Unlike most other Bedouins, these people never change their habitation, but remain there from year to year perfectly contented; and not without reason, as the climate is one of the healthiest in the world, and they have houses ready prepared of a better order than they are usually accustomed to. But they are not a rich tribe, having few flocks or herds, from the deficiency of pasture. The number of travellers who have visited them has been but few, and they have seldom been so well paid as by the "Great Lady"\* some years since, whose arrival was a kind of epoch in their existence. The tax these fellows demand for the privilege of visiting the ruins is an enormous sum, but they have the power in

\* Lady Hester Stanhope.

their hands to compel payment: the fault is not wholly theirs; but it is a pity that subsequent travellers are obliged to pay for the extravagance of their predecessors.

On the last day of our residence at Palmyra we roamed again amidst the courts and porticoes of the Temple of the Sun, the magnificence of which, however defaced and mutilated, is without a rival; but it is the general effect of the spectacle, more than the beauty of any particular part, that compels admiration. The weather had been very favourable during our stay, and we resolved to depart; but it was more easy to resolve than to execute.

Every thing being ready in the morning, and the baggage placed on the camels, we bade adieu to our host the sheik, who looked very sullen, and began to demand more than we had yet given him, mingling a little abuse in what he said. Some of his people followed his example; and to avoid an unpleasant altercation, we were obliged to part with a portion of our effects to satisfy their cupidity. We then left with pleasure their inhospitable region, and rode slowly in the direction by which we had first entered the plain. Whoever visits Palmyra, will find the delight he feels at beholding it most materially diminished by the disagreeable circumstances to which he is liable. If he is fortunate enough to avoid the dangers of the way, which are sometimes great, the insolence and rapacity of the Arabs will annoy him beyond measure.

Passing through the valley, we again entered the wide plain, bordered by hills; and no particular event marked our journey till we arrived at Carieteen. After resting

here for the night, we pursued our way the following day, and in the evening entered the delicious plain of Damascus ; the gardens, rivers, and palaces of which had a look of enchantment, after the weary progress through the Desert.

THE END.

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